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Studies in Galilee

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By

ERNEST W. GURNEY MASTERMAN, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.R.G.S.
Jerusalem

WITH A PREFACE

By

GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D., LL.D.
Professor of Old Testament Literature, United Free Church College, Glasgow

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF
L. M. N. M.

Born, Nazareth
October 29, 1872

Died, Jerusalem
April 27, 1908

folk-lore. Altogether, Dr. Masterman has labored for sixteen or seventeen years in the East. His numerous papers in journals devoted to the history or the geography of the Holy Land prove his acquaintance with the literature, ancient and modern, and have been largely used by experts. Very few know the recent history of the land or the life of the people like himself.

As he points out, there is no better center for exploring the greater part of the province than Safed, where he has lived and worked for two years. Safed commands the Upper Jordan Valley, the coasts of the Lake and both the Upper and Lower Galilees, through all of which the calls of his profession, as well as the interests of research, have carried him from time to time, and have given him many opportunities of revising and increasing his knowledge of the country. It is from Safed that an observer may most easily become familiar with the proportions of the whole province, while such famous localities as the plain of Butaiha, Gennesaret and the sites of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida lie immediately below him.

With all these the following chapters are concerned. The reader will find a lucid account of Galilee as a whole, its structure, frontiers, divisions, natural products, the resulting characters of its people's life, and its place in history. On the vexed questions of the particular topography, whether one agrees or not with Dr. Masterman's answers, it will be recognized that the data he offers for the latter are sound and that his reasoning is not arbitrary nor extreme. Especially welcome is the full information which he contributes about Gennesaret and the whole northern coasts of the lake. His support of the view, that extends Gennesaret east of the hill el ᶜOreimeh, is an important contribution to a more than difficult question. Those of us who have argued for a different conclusion from his as to the site of Capernaum will appreciate the reasonableness and insight of the evidence which he brings forward for Telhum; it must influence the further debate of this problem. Only less helpful are his descriptions of Kerâzeh and et-Tell, the probable sites of Chorazin and Bethsaida. English readers will welcome the summary of what is known of the ruined synagogues of Galilee, vivified as it is by the reports of Dr. Masterman's own visits to them and his observations of their curiously pagan features. The criticism of the figures of Josephus and of modern

estimates of the ancient population of Galilee seem to me of great value. I would have welcomed the expansion of the remarks on Nazareth into a description and discussion as long as that on Capernaum; and some treatment of the site of Taricheae. But Dr. Masterman does not offer his book as exhaustive of the data of Galilee. What he has given will both stimulate and control future discussion of a region which is not only full of many topographical problems but presents these to us in close connection with some of the greatest events of all history.

GEORGE ADAM SMITH

AUTHOR'S NOTE

To three of my friends my hearty thanks are due: to Mr. R. A. S. Macalister, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, for reading the proofs and for many suggestions; to Professor George Adam Smith, for kind help and advice, and to Miss Jean Kennedy for the trouble she has so generously undertaken in preparing the Index and lists of references.

E. W. G. M.

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PHYSICAL FEATURES, BOUNDARIES, AND CHIEF TOWNS

FISHERMEN MENDING THEIR NETS BY LAKE OF GALILEE, SOUTH OF TIBERIAS

CHAPTER I

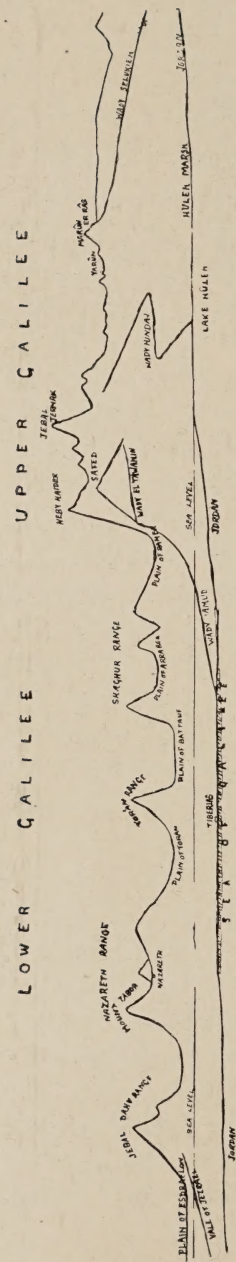
PHYSICAL FEATURES, BOUNDARIES, AND CHIEF TOWNS

The name Galilee is the Graecized form of the Hebrew גָּלִיל *galîl*, a word used (I Kings 6:34) to describe the "folding" or "rolling" of a door, and, as a substantive, translated a "ring" in Cant. 5:14; Esther 1:6. As a geographical expression, applied to other regions than what we know as Galilee, it is translated "country" (Ezek. 47:8) and "borders" (Josh. 13:2; 22:10, 11). There were thus several *galîls* as there were many frontiers, but the district now under consideration was known as *hag-galîl* or *the galîl* (Josh. 20:7; 21:32;[1] I Kings 9:11; II Kings 15:29; I Chron. 6:76) or, to give it its full title, *galîl hag-goyîm*[2] (Isa. 9:1), the "ring" or "region of the nations." It would appear in the earliest references to have been a small region around Kedesh, though later it seems to have comprised the possessions of Zebulon and Naphtali and a considerable proportion of that of Asher and Issachar. Its frontier was an ever-changing shore line toward the "nations" on which the tide ebbed and flowed, sometimes submerging the Hebrews and sometimes driving them north. Even within this district the peoples appear always to have been, as they are today, strangely mixed in both race and religion.

The ideal physical boundaries of this region are well defined—few small provinces have by nature so secure a frontier; yet these boundaries never appear in the whole course of Jewish history to have coincided with the political limits. On the south this division of Palestine is bounded by the Great Plain of Esdraelon, from the northern edge of which the hills of Nazareth rise with remarkable abruptness. To the west the Mediterranean, and to the east the Jordan and its two lakes, are nature's bounds. On the north modern custom has come to limit Palestine proper—and therefore Galilee—by the extraordinary gorge of the Kasimîyeh or Litâny

[1] Almost certainly also in Josh. 12:23.

[2] Compare *Harosheth hag-goyîm* (Judges 4:2), and their locality on the borders.



River. This deep cañon runs from east to west across the greater part of the mountain range, leaving but a narrow strip of high land between it and the Jordan Valley. The cliffs of this ravine rise in places almost sheer for over a thousand feet, and it is only at a few spots that it can be crossed.

Within these limits is confined a great variety of country, of climate, and of scenery. To the west lies the Plain of Akka—the delta formed by the two rivers of Lower Galilee, the Kishon and the Belus—which is separated by the great seaward jutting mountain range of Ras en Nakurah from the narrower, though more famous, coast region of Tyre and Sidon. To the east lies the most fertile and beautiful section of the Ghor or Jordan Valley with its abundant running waters and its tropical climate. Between these two level areas lies a region of mountain, hill, and plain, the most diversified and attractive in Palestine.

The mountain mass of Galilee is made up of stratified limestone of layers of varying denseness but almost without exception weathering rapidly under rain and frost. The rocks and stones, exposed unprotected to such influences, speedily disintegrate, while caves produced by the wearing away of soft underlying layers of the limestone are exceedingly common. At some spots near the Jermak are deep natural well-like holes in the rock of great depth, similar to the pot-holes found in England and other parts of Europe. Fossils are scarce, but bands of flints and spheroidal nodules of white quartz, varying in size from that of a walnut to a football, are very common, especially all about the central plateau. Overlying the lime-

stone there are many patches of trap-rock; all the laval outflows are on the eastern side of the water-parting. The most extensive area is that centering round the double volcanic peak known as the "Horns of Hattin." From here the lava has flowed out on all sides: it caps the limestone rocks overhanging the western side of the Lake of Tiberias and flows southeast down the wide valley of Sahel el Ahma, while northward it is spread out on the fertile plain of Hattin. In the district immediately to the north of this is another great deposit, probably an entirely independent outflow through which the Rubudîyeh stream has cut its way. Almost on the water-parting itself two little outcrops from dykes appear at Umm el ᶜAmed and also just below Deir Hannah. Safed, though its hills are entirely of soft chalky limestone, is encircled by trap-rock. To the west and northwest lie the great volcanic plateaus of el Jish and ᶜAlma—each with a rain-filled crater-like pool. On the north of Safed there is a patch of this rock high up in the mountains just below Benît. To the east a great outflow occupies the *Ghor* between Lake Huleh and the Lake of Tiberias; while southward all the lower ground between the mouth of the Jordan and el ᶜOreimeh is made up of terraces of black lava, through which, however, limestone hills project in places. Within sight of eastern Galilee are the numerous extinct volcanoes of the Jaulan, and the hot and sometimes sulphurous springs in the neighborhood of the Lake of Galilee are also evidences of slumbering subterranean fires. The testimony of history that this region has been the center of severe earthquakes is supported by the terrible destruction and overthrow of all the ancient remains.

One other physical feature of Galilee requires passing mention, namely, the great number of rich alluvial plains. Esdraelon, Akka, Torᶜan, Battauf, el Ghuweir (Gennesaret), el Huleh, Kedes, and Mês are some of the most important, and all of them are referred to elsewhere. In all, the alluvial deposits are of great depth and of extraordinary productiveness. Notwithstanding the long neglect of careful agriculture these plains still give Galilee something of her old character of wonderful fertility.

A. LOWER GALILEE

The Talmud[1] states that "Galilee contains the upper, the lower, and the valley" (i. e., the *Ghor*) and these are the three natural

[1] *Shebüth*, IX, 2.

divisions. The mountain region has by nature been very clearly divided into a southern lower part, where the hills are gentle and rounded, the plains wide and fertile and the natural roads easy and direct, and a northern or upper part, where there are lofty mountain peaks, deep narrow valleys and high plateaus. The natural dividing line is the great mountain range which runs due east and west to the north of the plain of Rameh, rising there to the point Jebal Haidar (3,440 feet) and culminating at the eastern end at the peaks of Jebalat el ᶜArûs (3,520 feet). Beyond the deep chasm of Wady el Tawahîn the direction of this range is continued by the southern wall of the mountain mass of Safed, and terminates at the eastern extremity of Jebal Kanᶜan (2,761 feet). When it is remembered that the highest point in all Lower Galilee is only 1,843 feet above the sea, and most of it is much lower, the outstanding nature of this great barrier is manifest. Lower Galilee, overlooked from such a height as Jebal Haidar, appears as a plain broken by wave behind wave of rounded hills. The lines of narrow plain land, stretching from the plain of Akka in the west to the Jordan Valley in the east, are most striking. Indeed this is the most noticeable feature in the geography of this region; the whole land consists of parallel ranges of hills running east and west with wide fertile valleys between. From south to north these ranges are Jebal Dahi (1,690 feet)—the "Little Hermon" of the mediaeval pilgrims—the Nazareth Range with Mount Tabor, the Torᶜan Range and the Southern and Northern Ranges of esh Shaghûr. The middle of these ranges—the Torᶜan—only extends half way across the land westward, and all these hill formations, but particularly the three southern ones, make a curved southward bend at their eastern end as they approach the Jordan or the lake. At these ends, too, the limestone formation is overlaid with much volcanic trap.

The great Plain of Esdraelon—known as Merj ibn ᶜAmir—appears naturally rather as a frontier or an arena of battle than as an integral part of Galilee. The domination over the plain appears to have belonged sometimes to the southern and sometimes to the northern inhabitants, but in times of weakness on the part of both, the Children of the East would sweep unchecked upon it and devastate its fruitful harvests like a swarm of locusts. The great western bay between Jebal Dahi and Tabor is certainly physically, as it has in history been

politically, an integral part of Galilee, and Carmel, at one period at any rate, followed its northern mountain neighbor. As regards the great triangular main stretch of plain the cities at the edge of the hills, such as Geba (Sheikh Abreik), Gabatha (Jebata), Simonias (Simûnieh), must have grown their cereals there, just as Nazareth does today. That the frontier was very ill-defined in the time of Josephus is shown by the fact that though he puts the northern boundary of Samaria at Ginea[1] (Jenîn), at the southern edge of the plain, he puts[2] the southern boundary of Galilee at Xaloth (the Chesulloth of the Old Testament), now Iksal, at the northern edge.

The Nazareth Range of hills reaches at Jebal es Sih, about three miles northeast of Nazareth, a height of 1,838 feet, and in the outlying spur of Tabor, 1,843 feet, while at Neby Sain, the hill immediately above Nazareth itself, a height of 1,602 feet is attained. From this central mass the ground falls on all sides. Westward there is an extension of low forest-bearing hills lying between the Kishon on the south and its tributary, the Wady el Malek, on the north. On the southern edge of this hill-country lies Sheikh Abreik, once a village of much importance, to judge from its tombs and caves, and probably the Gaba, "the City of Horsemen" of Josephus[3] where lived the horsemen of Herod, while near the northern edge is the little hamlet of Beit Lahum—the Bethlehem of Zebulon. The eastern extension of the Nazareth Range consists of a series of fertile plateaus in which volcanic elements are largely mixed. The high ground runs southward at its eastern extremity where it overhangs the Jordan Valley.

North of the Nazareth range comes the Plain of Torʿan along which runs the modern carriage road from Kefr Kenna to Tiberias. This alluvial plain, five miles long by one mile wide, drains westward through the Wady el Rummaneh into the Battauf, its waters finally reaching the Kishon through the Wady el Malek. Over the main water-parting near Lubieh the eastern extension of this plain runs southeast from opposite the "Horns of Hattin," in a wide, sloping valley, strewn with volcanic stone, which drains to the Jordan by the Wady el Fejjaz. This valley is known as the Sahel el Ahma, and is

[1] *B. J.*, III, iii, 4.

[2] *B. J.*, III, iii, 1.

[3] *Ant.* XV, viii, 5; *B. J.*, III, iii, 1.

probably Betzammin[1] across which Sisera rushed in headlong flight to his ignominious death. At the head of this same valley, around the scorched rocks of Hattin, the unfortunate Crusaders made their last ineffectual stand against the victorious Saladin (1187).

The Kurn Hattin is the center of the Torᶜan Range which here curves southeast and then south, where it overhangs the lake.

THE HORNS OF HATTIN—A VOLCANIC HILL

North of the Jebal Torᶜan is the marshy plain of el Battauf, nine miles long by two miles wide, doubtless once a lake. The western end drains into the Wady el Malek, but eastward has no proper outlet, and in winter months forms a great marsh most dangerous to cross. This was the plain of Asochis of Josephus. On its northern edge is Khurbet Kâna, identified in the Middle Ages as the Cana of Galilee of John 2:1–11; 4:46, and more probably the correct site than Kefr Kenna, a village in the Nazareth mountains favored by modern ecclesiastical tradition. It would appear almost certainly to have been the Cana of Josephus (see *Vita*, §§ 16, 17, 41). Half an hour's

[1] Judges 4:11.

ride up a valley from this ruin is Tell Jefat, a bare rocky hill showing few remains, but without doubt the site of Jotapata,[1] a very important fixed point in the topography of Josephus.

Over the water-parting to the east of el Battauf there is a rapid descent to the volcanic plateau of Hattin which drains by means of the Wady el Hamam into Gennesaret. North of the Battauf lies a somewhat confused mountain mass known as esh Shaghûr. One or two points, such as Râs Kruman (1817) and Râs Hazweh (1781), are nearly as high as the hills of Nazareth, but the average elevation is much under a thousand feet. The plateau of ᶜArrabeh has, when seen from a height, the appearance of a plain, and it divides esh Shaghûr into a southern and a northern range. The drainage of this district is through Wady Shaᶜib which joins the Wady Halzûn, one of the tributaries of the Belus (Nahr Naᶜmein). On a hill rising at the western end of this high plain of ᶜArrabeh is Sukhnîn, the Sikni or Siknin[2] of the Talmud and the Sogane[3] of Josephus. At its eastern end, crowning the water-parting, is the walled village of Deir Hannah, beyond which the ground rapidly sinks eastward into the Wady Selameh, a well-watered valley which drains the plain of Rameh and is continued southeast as the Wady er Rubudîyeh into Gennesaret. Wady es Salameh derives its name from Khurbet es Salameh, a ruin crowning a strong and extensive site on which once stood the city of Salamis.[4]

The Plain of Rameh lies between esh Shaghûr and the southern range of Upper Galilee. It chiefly drains southward as described. The valley to the east of Farradeh and Kefr Anan empties its waters by the Wady Maktul into the Wady el ᶜAmûd and thus to Gennesaret, while the western extension, a long open valley—Wady esh Shaghur—full of olive groves and cornfields, drains through the Wady el Halzun into the Belus at Akka. The whole of Lower Galilee is of great natural fertility. The plains are splendid arable lands; those of el Mughâr and Rameh are celebrated for their great groves of olives, a product for which Galilee was always celebrated. "It is easier,"

[1] See Josephus, *B. J.*, Book iii, chaps. 6 and 7.

[2] *Tal. Bab. Rosh.-Nash. Shannah*, 29 *n.*

[3] *Vita*, 51.

[4] Josephus, *B. J.*, II, xx, 6.

it is said in the Talmud,[1] "to raise a legion of olive trees in Galilee than to raise one child in Judea." Vines are not today widely cultivated except around Rameh and, to some extent, Nazareth. The hills are in places well wooded, particularly a quadrangular patch at the southwest corner of the Nazareth range and rolling country to the northeast and east of the slopes of Tabor. The lower valleys both to the east and west are all more or less wooded. The hills of Shaghur and also those to the east of Rameh are covered with "brush wood" —a shrubby growth now replacing what was only a few years ago a forest of fine trees. The shrubs consist of dwarf oaks of several kinds, terebinths, karûb (locust tree), zaʿrûr (hawthorn), wild olives and figs, meis (nettle tree), and arbutus, all capable of developing into noble trees, as well as storax, bay-laurel, myrtle, caper, sumakh, and lentisk, while the water courses are adorned by great masses of beautiful oleanders, willows, planes, and, occasionally, poplars. The sycomore fig, once said to have been a characteristic product of Lower Galilee, is now scarce in these parts. Groves of sacred terebinths occur in many places and the thorny zizyphus (sidr), when covering a holy tomb, often attains noble proportions.

The water-supply of this district is rich specially in the lower ground, but even in the mountains good springs are plentiful. At many of the villages are copious springs, e. g., Seffurieh, Reineh, Nazareth, Hattin, Farradeh, while at the head of the Wady Salameh the fountains give rise to a perennial stream sufficient to work several mills. Reckoning together the mountain region and the low-lying plains east, south, and west, it would be hard to find a land at once so diversified and so richly supplied with nature's gifts. The vast majority of the historical references to Galilee, whether in the Maccabean period, in that of the New Testament or of the Roman wars, refer to places in Lower Galilee. This is the more natural when we notice how the great roads traversed the district. The most certainly ancient of routes is that highroad marked today by the ruins of khans which crosses lower Galilee from northeast to south, and was known in mediaeval times as the Via Maris. Coming from Damascus across the black stony Jaulan, it crossed the Jordan at the Jisr Benat Yaʿkûb, ascended in a southwest direction to the Khan Jubb Yusuf, where,

[1] *Ber. Rabba*, par. 20.

after giving off branches to Safed, to Akka (via Rameh) and to Kerazeh and the mouth of the Jordan, it descended to the Khan Minyeh. From here it crossed el Ghuweir (Gennesaret) and, either by way of the Wady Hamâm, Irbid and Hattin, or (as at present) by the more open Wady Abu el Amîs, it ran up to the higher plateau, whence it ran by Khan el Tujjâr, across Esdraelon, and southward through the great pass at Lejjûn to the coast. This highroad is an extremely ancient one and may be that referred to in Isa., chap. 9. A branch of this road skirted the western shore of the lake and ran southward to Jerusalem via Beisân, Tubâs and the Plain of Makhneh, a route still strewn along its whole length with groups of Roman milestones. The broad valleys running east to west must always have been natural routes to the coast, particularly to the ancient port of Akka; one of the most important of these traversed the Plain of Torʿan, past Sufurieh, and thence led by the Wady Abellin to the Akka plain; another ran from the Khan Jubb Yusuf, across the Wady Tawahîn, past Khurbet Abu Shebʿa, Rameh and Khurbet Kabra—the Gabara of Josephus[1]—and into the Plain of Akka by the Wady Wazeyeh. Both these routes are in constant use today. The whole district is intersected with numberless paths, almost all of which are possible to loaded camels—except after heavy rain—and in the period of Galilee's greatness all the chief cities must have been connected by more or less well-made roads or paths.

B. UPPER GALILEE

The lofty mountain region known as "Upper Galilee" is not easy to describe in a terse manner. It appears to the casual observer a confused mass of tumbled mountains, to which not even the map can give an orderly view. The sharp line of the southern mountain rise has already been described; from the Jebal Kanʿan at the southeast corner this range is continued almost due north and runs as a mountain wall of steep declivity along the whole western edge of the Jordan Valley, reaching its most impressive heights at the north where Jebal Hunîn (2,951 feet) and Nebi Audeidah (2,814 feet) tower precipitously above the plain.

[1] *Vita*, 10, 15, 25, 40, 46, 47, 61; *B. J.*, III, vii, 1. In some passages called Gadara, by a textual error.

Almost in the center of this range is the plateau and town of Kades—the famous Kadesh Naphthali—a little north of which is the curious shut-in basin of Mês. Along the length of this chain runs an important and ancient highroad from Safed to the Merj Ayūn.

The central point of Upper Galilee is Jebal Jermak (3,934 feet), the highest point in Palestine; it is the culminating point on a ridge

SAFED—THE VILLAGE IN THE FOREGROUND IS BERIAH

which runs from Jebalat el ᶜArûs and through the Jermak summit to the Jebal Adâther (3,300 feet). This ridge may be called the Jermak range. To the northeast of this range is the great central plateau to which belong the volcanic plateaus of el Jish and ᶜAlma, as well as the more westerly fertile plains of Merōn, el Jish, and Yarûn.

In this central region of elevation, the lowest plains of which are higher than the top of Tabor, four main water courses rise and run to the four points of the compass. On the east side of Jebal Jermak, and between that point and the Safed mountains, rises the deep

gorge of Wady el Tawahîn which runs southward to Gennesaret. From the northeast slopes near el Jish rises the Wady Hindaj (known in its higher reaches as Wady Farah and Wady Auba) which, after making a semicircle to the north, runs out into the Ghor as an extraordinarily steep and precipitous gorge, and finally empties its waters into the Huleh. From the northwest and west slopes of Jermak arise the rootlets of the equally deep Wady el Kurn which runs due westward to the Mediterranean. The Wady Selukieh takes its origin a little north of the Jermak and, after pursuing a course almost due north, joins the Kasimîyeh some twenty-five miles above its mouth.

These valleys are the most important in the land; they all have, over much of their courses, deep and precipitous sides and in parts perennial streams. They rise close together, all indeed but the last, from the slopes of the Jebal Jermak itself. By them "Upper Galilee" is divided into four quarters. Of these dividing lines the most important is that made across the land from east to west by the combined Wady Hindaj and Wady el Kurn.

From the summit of the Jermak the greater part of Galilee lies spread out as on a raised map. Eastward rises the white chalky hill of Safed with the town itself—the largest in Galilee—clustered around its lofty castle hill, to the southwest part of the range. Villages may be seen scattered around some of its numerous springs. Akbara[1] with its towering precipice to the south, Ed Dahareyeh just below Safed itself, and Beriah and ᶜAin ez Zeitûn—each with watered gardens—to the north. On the eastern slopes of Jermak is Meron. Between it and Safed lie five miles of stony barren hills, once within memory of living man covered with thick brushwood. To the northeast the grey volcanic plateau Merj el Jish, with its water-filled crater (the Birket el Jish), catches the eye.

Around the edge of the plateau are several villages. To the west of this lies el Jish, crowning a white chalky hill, with a level of fertile gardens and vineyards to the south. Somewhat nearer is the little squalid village of Sifsâf, almost hidden in its grove of figs and olives. Behind el Jish the lofty mountain village of Merûn er Râs stands out conspicuous. More directly north of us is Saᶜsaᶜ which, though

[1] The Achabari of Josephus, *Vita*, §37; *B. J.*, II, xx, 6.

crowning a hill-top, appears from here to lie in the plain at our feet. Farther off is Kefr Berʿim, on the waterparting between north and south. Still beyond lies Yarûn. A little to the left (west) of Yarûn lies Rummaish, on the edge of its fertile plain. Distinctly visible is its large rain-fed birket, that is much in evidence in the spring.

THE VILLAGE OF EL JISH—VIEW FROM THE SOUTH

To the northwest lie the two villages of ed Deir and el Kâsy, on twin hilltops. Behind these, at a distance of about five miles, is the lofty hill of Belât. More directly westward is the flourishing little town of Teirshîha and its neighbor, Malia, rising at the two extremities of a small plain largely given over to the cultivation of tobacco. This was part of the rich estate of the Teutonic knights, the astonishing ruins of whose once powerful castle Montfort (now Kulʿat el Kurein) crowns an almost inaccessible height in the Wady

el Kurn. Between us and Teirshîha we can see the great terebinth which overshadows the sacred tomb of Nebi Sibelan.[1]

To the southwest is the high mountain Druze village of Beit Jinn, rising out of the maze of bush-crowned hill and valley which constitutes the district known as el Jebal or "the Mountain." This, but for the continuous and ruthless destruction wrought by the charcoal burners, would be a great forest, as it probably was in olden days; there are few ruins here. Beyond Beit Jinn and hidden from our view is the wide open valley of el Bukeiʿa, one of the tributaries of the Wady el Kurn, in which is the village of el Bukeiʿa, with its mixed Druze, Moslem, Christian, and Jewish population. The town lies in a veritable oasis of verdure, a product of its copious springs. One of its admiring inhabitants compared it not inaptly to a miniature Damascus in the style of its dwellings and its fresh, well-watered gardens. Besides so much of Upper Galilee, the Jermak view includes the Bay of Akka, Carmel, the mountains of Samaria and all Lower Galilee, the Lake of Tiberias, the Jaulan, Hermon, and the Lebanon.

The northwest portion of Galilee is a richly wooded district consisting of a vast entanglement of hills and valleys full of villages and still more of ruins. Inasmuch as by the widest estimate of the true limits of the Galilee of history most of this region must have belonged to Tyre, it needs no further description here. Its main roads, or rather paths, leading to Tyre are unusually good for Palestine. They wind along valleys frequently clothed from base to summit with brushwood.

The higher mountain plateaus are as a whole deficient in springs as compared with Lower Galilee. Even where springs are present, water is scanty, and many of the villages are entirely dependent on artificial rain-filled pools. The large Metâweleh village of Bint Umm Jebail, famous through the land for its great weekly market, has a pool so considerable that even in September I found boys bathing waist deep in the water. The large villages of Rumaish, Hunîn,

[1] There is a tiny village around the tomb; the place has been suggested as the site of the town of Zebulun, but there is no depth of débris here nor any ancient pottery. If Sibelan contains an echo of Zebulun, the ancient site must be under the adjoining—though lower lying—village of Khurfaish, which is certainly an old site.

Tersheîha, Suhmāta, ᶜAlma, and others are entirely dependent on such pools as these for their water for domestic uses and for their cattle. Safed has many springs in its neighborhood, some of them very good ones. El Jish and Merōn each have good fountains in valleys below them about half a mile away.

This lack of water is largely compensated for by the "dew clouds" which in all the late summer months fall at night so copiously over the land. Such "dew" occurs all over Palestine, but nowhere in such plenty as in the highlands of the north. It is most important to agriculture; without it the harvest may be long delayed and even may be partially lost, for the Fellahîn maintain that they dare not gather the ripened grain when absolutely dry, as after the parched sirocco, because the grain will fall in the process of reaping. After a night of "dew" there is no such risk. Then for the grapes, the figs, and the olives, indeed for all the autumn crops, this heavy "dew" is essential.

This is the "dew" (*tal*) of the Bible, but it is really the product of clouds which are blown often from the north, from Hermon,[1] and settle on the highlands after sunset. The gauzy cloud may be seen blown overhead as the evening closes in, and in the early morning the mist lies thick over the ground and fills all the deeper valleys. How heavy is this "dew" may be judged by the fact that when one September I traversed the central ridge of Galilee northward toward Hermon, it was inadvisable on any night to sit without a mackintosh outside the tent after sunset, and every morning the tent canvas was soaked with water, the moisture dropping audibly off the edges.

The products of this mountain region are many—wheat, barley, Egyptian maize, lentils, cucumbers, pumpkins, and melons. Olives are plentiful as far north as Kefr Berᶜim, but north of that on the central plateau they are very scanty. There the people either purchase olive oil, or use oil which they produce themselves in considerable quantities from sesame (oilseed). Figs are cultivated everywhere. Mulberries, walnuts, apricots, pears, and other fruits flourish in favorable spots. Oranges, lemons, and citrons are grown in the deeper, warmer valleys around Safed. Vines flourish in this district, and many acres of vineyards are now yielding well in several

[1] Cf. Ps. 133:3.

of the Jewish colonies, especially at ᶜAin ez Zeitûn and at Rosh Pinna (Jaᶜuneh) near Safed. Tobacco is grown extensively, especially in the north and west, but solely for local use; indeed the authorities of the "Tobacco Regie"[1] so despise it that they shut their eyes to its cultivation.

The great natural fertility of Galilee as a whole, as compared with Judea, may be ascribed to:

1. Its comparatively excellent water supply. Even where the springs are scanty the "dew" is very heavy.

2. The gentler slope of the hills and the wider plains.

3. The deep rich soil in which is mixed, in many parts, the detritus of volcanic rock.

4. The fact that over much of the hills the native growth of brushwood has been left. In Judea, where every available foot of the soil had to be utilized, the native growth has in many places been entirely destroyed to allow of the hills being terraced for cultivation. But when the terraces fell from neglect, the earth gradually was washed down the hillside to the valley below. In Lower Galilee this has also occurred in many places. With careful terracing the possible area of cultivation might be vastly increased.

One last characteristic of modern Galilee remains to be mentioned briefly, namely, its remarkably mixed population. In Lower Galilee most of the inhabitants are either Moslems (i. e., orthodox Sunnites), Christians (either Greek orthodox or Greek Catholic), or Jews. But when we reach the confines of Upper Galilee many new elements appear. At Rameh, Beit Jinn, el Bukeiᶜa, and elsewhere, we come across Druzes. In Safed, besides Jews from all parts of the world and native Moslems, there are Kurds and Algerians. In the villages, on the high thoroughfare to the north there is a new religion or race in every second village. At Râs el Ahmar, ᶜAlma, and Deishûn there are Algerians. In a separate village of ᶜAlma, on the same plain and within sight of its namesake, there is a large settlement of Circassians, a race which has also settled in other spots. In the extreme north, near Banias, there is one village of Nasairîyeh and another of Turkomans.

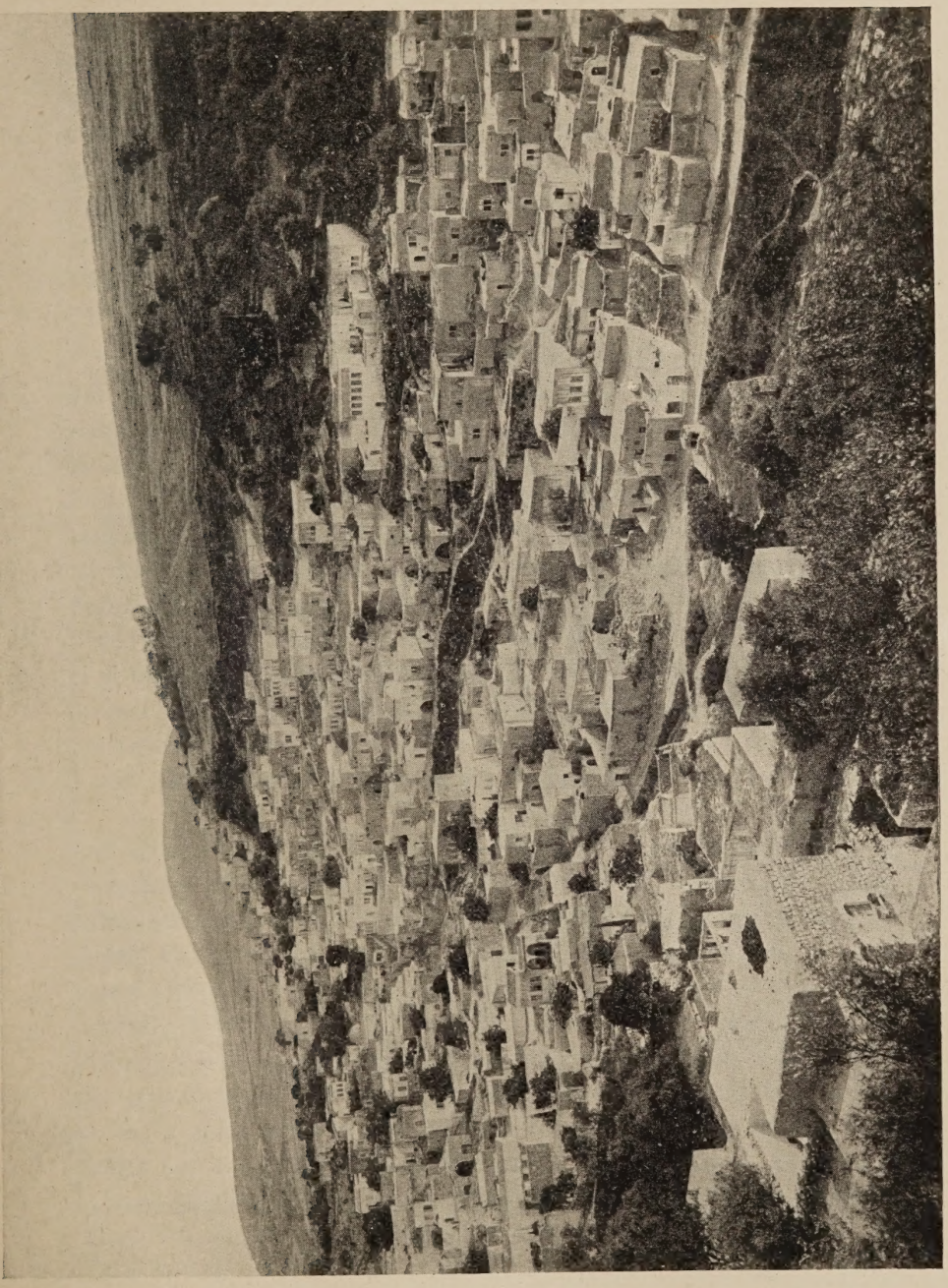
[1] Who have a monopoly of tobacco and can if they wish forbid its cultivation or destroy what they do not need for their own use.

As a whole, in the northwest quarter the Christians are Maronites, and the followers of Mohammed are Metâweleh, i. e., Shiites. Both sects agree in fanatical intolerance of all others. Kefr Berʿim, ʿAin Ibl, and Dibl are Maronite centers. One of the largest Metâweleh villages is Bint Umm Jebail, but this sect is in the majority all over the northern area and in the environs of Tyre it constitutes 70 per cent. of the population. They will not eat with any but the mem-

BANIAS

bers of their own religion; they will destroy a food-vessel used by an unbeliever. In many respects they are very unlike their Moslem (Sunnite) neighbors; their women go unveiled and have none of the assumed modesty of the ordinary oriental women toward strangers. It is said that when one of their men has to go a long journey, and particularly on military service, he hands over his wife to a friend who takes her into his own household until the real husband's return, when the wife is handed back; but the friend retains any children she may have born to him during her temporary marriage to him.[1]

[1] This is similar to some of the customs mentioned in Robertson Smith's *Kinship and Marriage in Arabia*.



SAFED—THE MOSLEM QUARTER

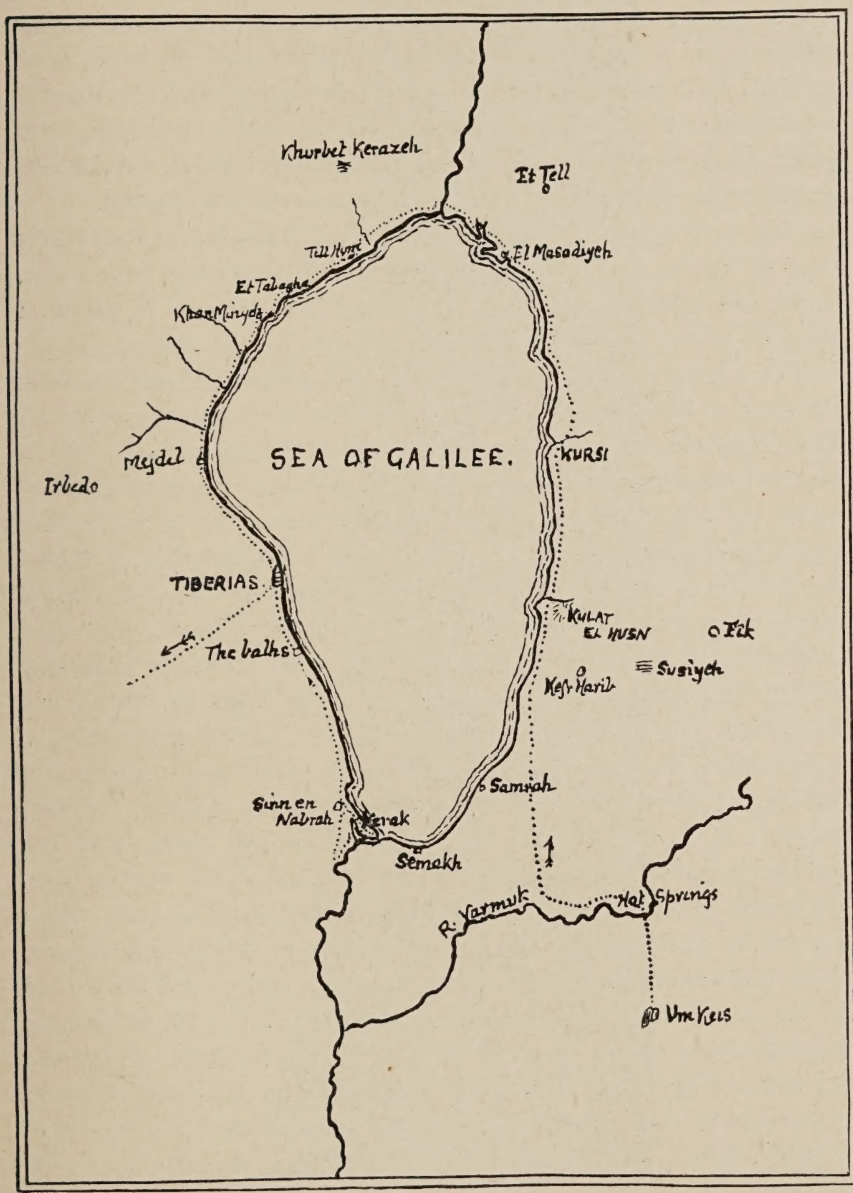
As a rule a village is either entirely of one sect or at most of two, and the several communities never intermarry. Though the basis of separation is religious differences, there is now—if not originally in all cases—a considerable physical difference that enables one who knows the people well, to recognize at once to which community any individual belongs. Taken as a whole, the people of Northern Palestine are physically finer than those of Southern Palestine. Their costumes also, which are very varied and often extremely picturesque, are superior to those of the Fellahîn of the south.

C. THE UPPER JORDAN VALLEY

The Talmud, as has been mentioned, divides Galilee into the "Upper" the "Lower," and the "Valley." This last section, comprising the Upper Jordan Valley and the two lakes, is a district of great importance to Galilee, though by no means in all history included politically within it. It was always a valuable frontier to the mountain region and when belonging to the mountaineers must, with its abundant water supplies and rich verdure, have been a cherished possession. Much that is said (chap. iii) about Gennesaret will apply to a large part of the Upper Jordan region. Although it is rightly described as part of Galilee, the upper portion would appear to have been looked upon, before the time of Herod, as a separate district, wild and unsubdued, in the marshes of which robbers found a refuge.[1]

It is the Jordan and its tributaries which give the distinctive character to this region. Two of the sources of the Jordan must be considered as rising outside of Palestine proper. Of these the more northerly is the picturesque ᶜAin Fuwwâr, below Hasbayeh, in which the water bubbles up in a little pool and, descending under the name Nahr Hasbani, turns the Wady el Teim into a paradise of verdure. Below this oasis the river has cut for some miles a deep channel southward through a mass of lava. At the well-known bridge on the road to Banias the stream may be seen running upon a bed of limestone, having in the course of ages cut through the whole thickness of the volcanic rock. The second of the northerly sources of the Jordan is the little Nahr Bareighit which drains the fertile Merj ᶜAyûn—the "Meadow of Springs"—known to us in the Bible

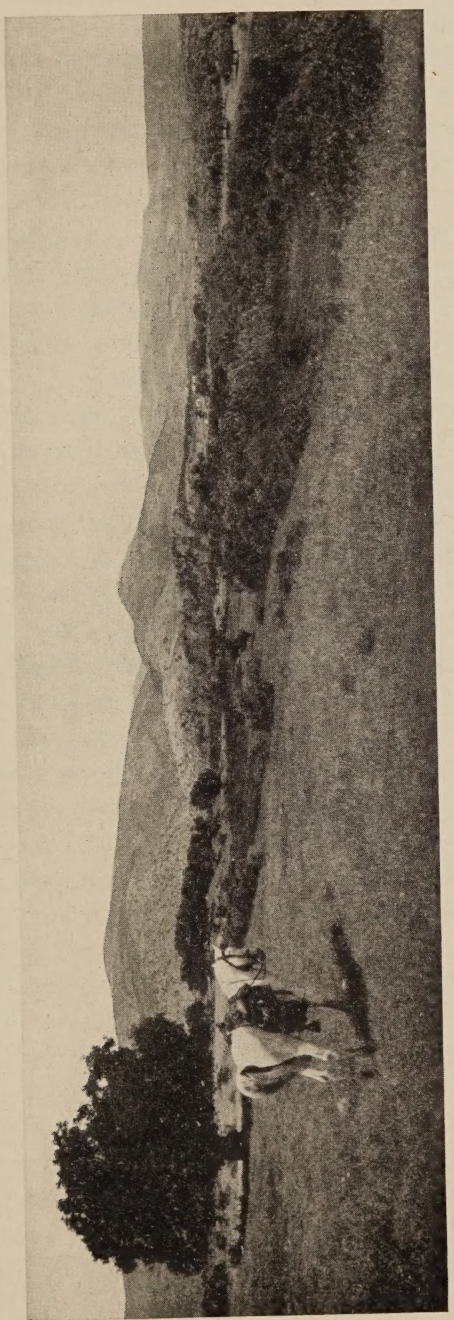
[1] Josephus, *B. J.*, I, xvi, 5.


Khurbet Kerazeh
Et Tell
Tell Hum
El Masadiyeh
Et Tabegha
Khan Minyeh
Irbedo
Mejdel
SEA OF GALILEE.
KURSI
TIBERIAS
The baths
KULAT EL HUSN
Fik
Susiyeh
Kefr Harib
Samakh
Sinn en Nabrah
Kerak
Semakh
R. Yarmuk
Hot Springs
Um Keis

(I Kings 15:20; II Kings 25:29; II Chron. 16:4) as Ijon. The water rises in two large fountains and, being much used for irrigation, it is only a small stream that descends by a series of cascades past M'utelleh and the great Tell Ābel (Abel-beth-Maacah mentioned with Ijon in the above references), and finally, with contributions from streamlets further south, joins the Hasbani about a mile north of where the latter loses itself in the true Jordan.

The most impressive sources of the Jordan are the two southerly ones at Banias and Tell el Kādi respectively. At the former site, 1,080 feet above sea level, the ice-cold water bursts forth in a river from the vast accumulation produced by the collapse of the roof of a former sacred cave. The water tumbles and rushes amid the ruins of once splendid Caesarea Philippi, and waters a corner of Palestine unequaled even today, in its neglect, for its picturesque beauty and for its handsome timbered glades. Here was once the shrine of Pan, hence the name Paneas. By Cleopatra it was rented to the robber chieftain Zenodorus and in 20 B. C. came into the hands of Herod the Great; by Herod Philip it was named Caesarea Philippi; and by Herod Agrippa II, after entertaining here in pleasure and cruel sports the conqueror of his people, it was called Neronias in flattery of another Caesar. All these names are now forgotten locally and the shrine of Pan is by its inhabitants, who cannot pronounce P, today called Banias. "Everywhere," writes Tristram,[1] "there is a wild medley of cascades, mulberry trees, fig trees, clashing torrents, festoons of vines, bubbling fountains, reeds and ruins, and the mingled music of birds and waters." The source at Tell el Kadi (500 feet above sea level) is in many respects a contrast to all this. Here the waters quietly bubble up, in volume much greater than at Banias, from the western end of a great *tell*. Part unite to form a pool to the west, but the larger volume descends as a quiet millstream past one of the most impressive sacred groves in the land. This great *tell* is probably the site of Dan, for *Kady* (Arabic) and *Dan* (Hebrew) both mean "judge;" while in the name of the river which here arises, el Leddan, there is possibly an echo of the ancient name. In the time of Josephus[2] the spot was apparently known as Daphne, where was, he says, the temple of the golden calf.

[1] *Land of Israel*, p. 586. [2] *B. J.*, IV, i, 1.



THE ENVIRONS OF BANIAS (CAESAREA PHILIPPI)

The two rivers, the Nahr Banias and the Nahr el Leddan, run southward, independently, for some five or six miles and then join to make one stream.

Besides these four main streams, a great many rivulets burst up from the basalt along the whole northern extremity of the valley. These, together with the numerous irrigation canals, make the center of this district a scene of running waters and flooded fields in which are cultivated quantities of rice, maize (Indian corn), and cotton.

During the past decade or two there has been a marked increase in cultivation here, and by means of irrigation canals fruitful areas like those around Zuk el Tahta and el Khalisah have been converted into acres of beautiful gardens. Here and elsewhere there are large clumps of handsome silver poplars—the growth of which as timber is a profitable industry—as well as orchards of fruit trees. What has been done is but a fraction of what might be accomplished under more careful husbandry. As it is, the larger part of the great fertile plain between the Jordan sources and the Huleh marshes is given over to Bedawin who, besides the crops mentioned, raise quantities of barley, durra (Egyptian maize), and sesame (oil-seed). Recently the plain north of the Huleh has been extensively drained and converted from marsh to pasture land through the artificial lowering of the Jordan bed below the Huleh Lake[1] and there are now many hundred more acres of useful land than, say, forty years ago, when "Rob Roy" MacGregor made his famous journey. A number of little villages are dotted over the plain, and near the northern end, besides many mills, there rises, half hidden in trees, the large mansion which the sheikh of the Fadl tribe has recently built as his residence.

At intervals along the long line of the Western Galilean Mountains copious fountains give rise to streams for further irrigation of the plain. Near these spots are to be found at various seasons the encampments of the Ghawārineh Bedawin with their flocks of buffaloes, cattle, and goats. Never were creatures more adapted to their environment than these buffaloes which on hot days lie almost entirely submerged in the running streams or the marshy pools, in marked contrast to their cousins, the cows, which stand in the broiling

[1] This work has been done by the managers of the Tchiflik—the late sultan's private property.

sunshine but knee-deep in the cool waters. The Arabs mentioned make great quantities of mats out of the papyrus reeds from the neighboring swamp, where flourishes the greatest solid mass of papyrus in the world. The men gather the reeds and split them into flat bands which the women and girls weave on very primitive looms. Of these mats the people make their own houses, and they dispose of great numbers as floor-mats to the Fellahîn of the mountains.

ʿAin el Mellahah is the largest of these springs; its waters rise in a large fish-filled pool and, after working several mills, enter Lake Huleh as a stream of considerable volume. Towering immediately above this great source is the lofty hill of Harrāweh which, from both its conspicuous position and its extensive ruins, must have been once a place of great importance and is very generally considered to be the site of Hazor.[1] An ancient highroad skirts the foot of these western hills, running from fountain to fountain, and at several spots along this route may still be seen sacred groves of terebinths where the superstitious come for cure of disease, or deposit, in the guardianship of the "spirit of the grove," brushwood, bundles of papyrus, or plows, well knowing that no one will dare violate the shrine.

Lake Huleh itself is a shallow expanse of water 3½ miles long by 3 miles wide; its bottom is covered thick with water weeds whose swaying branches lie almost everywhere just below the surface, while at many spots the yellow, and here and there the white, water lily adorn the muddy waters. Fish abound; the catfish and the *musht* are caught in quantities both by the cast net from the shore and from boats by means of the *m'batten*.[3] Among the many birds found here, the beautiful white pelican is particularly conspicuous; when on the wing it is a strikingly noble bird. The shores on the east or west sides of this triangular sheet of water are, except after heavy rain, fairly firm; on the west, rich wheat land[2] comes close up to the beach though standing some six feet above it. Along the northern edge of the open water there floats a dense mass of papyrus—some 6 miles long and 1½ miles broad—supporting in its interstices

[1] See Josephus, *Ant.*, V, v, 1.

[2] Rabbi Schwarz says, "this lake is called by the Arabs Bahr Chit, 'wheat sea,' because much wheat is sown in the neighborhood," p. 47. This name I have never heard; it is I think a confusion with the name Ard el Khait.

[3] See chap. ii.

many smaller plants. The Jordan, which loses itself at the northern extremity of this mass of floating vegetation, reaches the lake along a narrow winding open channel. When rowing here in a clumsy fishing-boat in 1907 I was unable to ascend this channel more than a hundred yards, but "Rob Roy" MacGregor[1] in his slender canoe threaded the narrow passage a distance which he calculates was three miles. Whether the channel is today as it was then—40 years ago—is a question which it needs another adventurous canoeist to decide. My impression is that the present channel very rapidly narrows, then disappears as a single open channel. We did not find the papyrus reeds as high as he described them—15 to 20 feet; the average height, after carefully measuring many specimens, was about 8 to 10 feet. The fishermen are, we learned, accustomed from time to time to burn the reeds to restrain their advancing growth, and this may account for their smaller size.

On the western shore of the Huleh is the Jewish colony of Jessod Hamaalah, generally known as Ezbaid, from the Arabic name of the district. Here may be seen hundreds of beautiful eucalypti growing in their greatest perfection with massive trunks and lofty spreading branches. The colonists are not as prosperous as they deserve to be, because of a malignant form of malaria and that scourge of Africa, blackwater fever, which are both endemic here. There is no doubt that more might be done than has yet been attempted to improve the sanitary condition. The extensive gardens and plantations are today in a condition less flourishing than some years ago, when the settlers received more outside assistance. Just south of Ezbaid is the squalid village of et Teleil, supposed by some to be the Thella mentioned by Josephus[2] as the eastern boundary of Galilee. Around this place are encamped numbers of pseudo-Bedawin, some of whom are descendants of Kurds who settled there a century or more ago. The whole plain west of the Huleh, known as Ard el Kheit, is one of marvelous agricultural richness and in the spring there are miles of waving grain.

Lake Huleh, the Lake Samachonitis of Josephus, has been popularly identified with the Waters of Meron of Josh. 11:5–7. It is an identification which rests on but little probability. The expression "waters" (מים) is an unusual one for any lake-like expanse and there

[1] See *Rob Roy on the Jordan.*

[2] *B. J.*, III, iii, 1.

is no trace of a survival of the name Merom in the immediate neighborhood. An echo of the name does, however, appear to remain in Meron and Marûn er Râs, villages in Upper Galilee. The district of Meron may have been there and the "waters" may have been the name of some springs within that area. The modern name Huleh may with probability be traced back to Ulatha, a name given by Josephus to this very region. It was a division of the country by itself, associated with Paneas, which belonged to the freebooter Zenodorus, but later to Herod the Great.[1] On the shores of the Huleh (Samachonitis) was a town called Seleucia which was on the border of Agrippa's kingdom.[2]

The Huleh plain, which is bounded on the west, north, and east by high mountains, is even to the south very definitely limited by a number of low volcanic hills which appear from a distance to convert it into a closed basin. However, the Jordan has, here, as farther north, managed to cut for itself a deep channel through the obstruction. For the first two miles the descent is gradual and the sluggish stream peacefully winds through meadow lands, until it reaches the Jisr Benât Yaʿkūb. This mediaeval bridge probably derives its name, "the bridge of the daughters of Jacob," not from any association with the patriarch, but from a connection which it had in the days of the Crusades with a nunnery of St. James (who is called in Arabic Yaʿkūb), the tolls on this bridge having been given to the nunnery.[3] Just below the bridge, where there is a ruin on a low hill known today as Kusr ʿAtra—the remains of the Château Neuf of the Crusaders—the river commences its rapid plunge downward. For some six or seven miles the river rages and tumbles in a bed deep cut in the lava until, as the Bataihah is approached, its waters are diverted to many mill streams. Thence the much impoverished main stream makes a quiet passage seaward through low banks of alluvial deposit, overhung at many spots by beautiful trees. In the twelve miles of river between the two lakes the total fall is 689 feet,

[1] *Ant.*, XV, x, 2.

[2] *B. J.*, IV, i, 1. Schumacher would identify Selukîyeh, a place seven miles to the southeast of the lake, with Seleucia, but this is opposed to the statement of Josephus. See *The Jaulan*, p. 257.

[3] See *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, 1898, p. 29.

an average descent of 57 feet to the mile, but over the central section the rate of fall is very much greater. The Valley of the Jordan in this part is inhabited by a few Bedawin who manage to avoid the taxes and escape the justice of the government by crossing to the east side when "wanted" by the governor of Safed, or to the west side when "wanted" by the Damascus authorities.

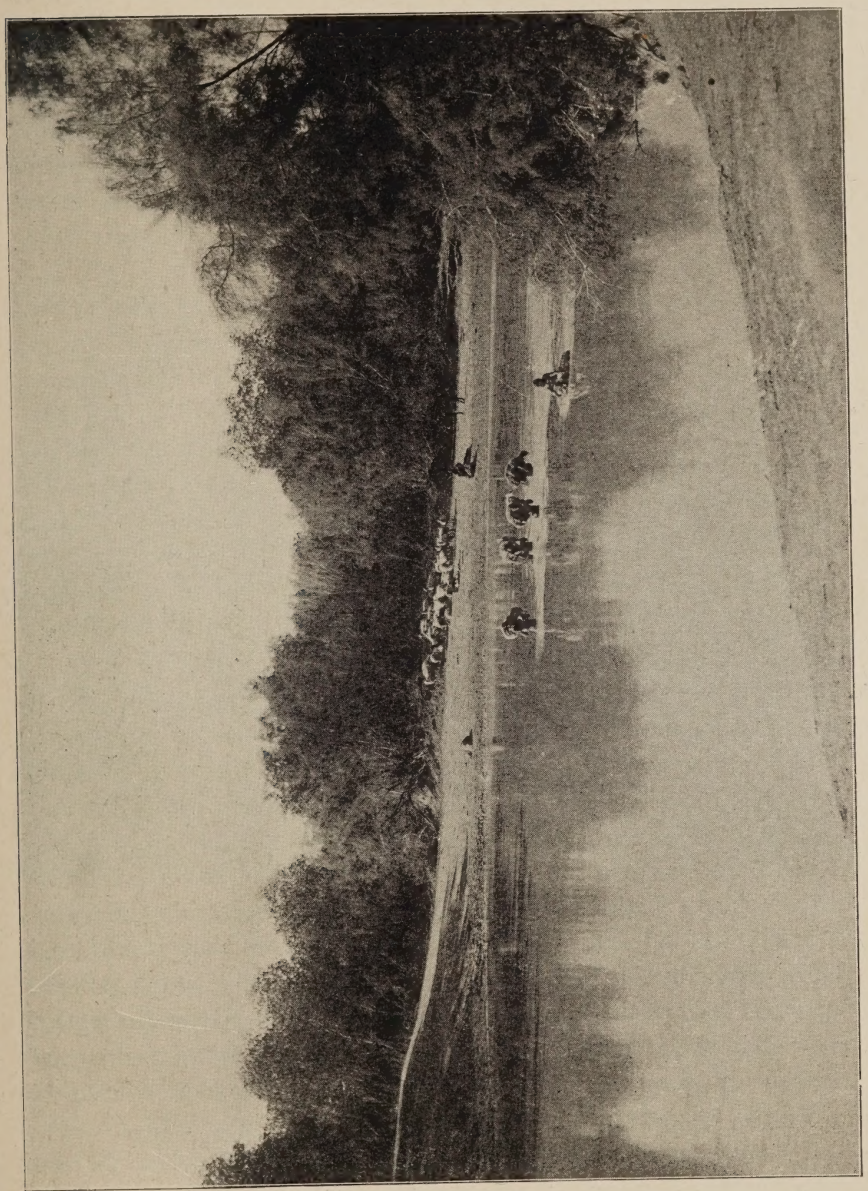
The Lake of Galilee is characterized by its rich alluvial plains to the north and south, the great prevalence of volcanic rocks near its shores, its own natural riches, and, more than all, by its historic associations. The two great alluvial plains at the northwest and northeast corners of the lake—el Ghuweir and el Bataihah—are described elsewhere.[1] At the southern end the old lacustrine deposits[2] present toward the present lake a line of low marly cliffs divided by the Jordan at its exit. On the cliff to the west of the river mouth, just above the lake, is el Kerak, once the site of the Taricheae of Josephus; to the east the cliffs are surmounted by the village of es Semakh, a place which has recently sprung into notice through its railway station: a rough wooden pier has been erected here for the convenience of passengers proceeding to Tiberias. There is a ford at the mouth of the Jordan and, when the water is raised by the spring floods, a ferry; but a bridge must some day be erected here connecting Tiberias with the railway station. A little farther down, the shallow river eddies and swirls over the ruins of two ancient bridges. The hill of Kerak is almost an island, a backwater of the river half filling the deep trench which isolates it on the part not abutting on lake or river.

On the northern shore the lava reaches the lake wherever the alluvial land is absent; on the east the cliffs are largely volcanic, overlying the limestone, and on the west the lava—part of the Hattin outflow—lies all along the summit of the limestone hills. Along the eastern side there is a plain—in places nearly a mile wide—between the mountains and the lakes; to the west the plain is narrower but reaches considerable breadth near Tiberias.

The lake is 13 miles long by 8 miles broad; its water is pure and

[1] See chaps. ii and iv.

[2] That is, the sedimentary deposits laid down by the great lake which once filled this whole valley.



SHEPHERDS FORDING THE JORDAN

limpid; storms are rare, but local squalls of considerable violence sometimes occur with extraordinary rapidity. Sailing on the lake requires practical experience because of this, and because the gusts of wind coming down the valley mouths strike the water in unexpected directions. There is a difference of from two to three feet in the level of the lake in the spring and autumn.[1] Recently the phenomena known as "seiches," which have been studied with such detail on the Swiss and Scottish lakes, have been observed here.[2] The rises appear to be about three an hour.

Around the shores of the lake are the sites of many famous towns. Near the entrance of the Jordan is et Tell, the site of Bethsaida. On the opposite side of the river, about two miles to the west, is Tell Hūm, the ruin of Capernaum. Less than two miles to the north of this is Khurbet Kerāzeh, the site of Chorazin. At the northwest corner of the lake is el Mejdel, now but a squalid village, by tradition the site of Magdala. Hidden in the mountains farther west is Irbid, the ancient Arbela. Between el Mejdel and Tiberias lay Bethmaus,[3] which may have occupied an isolated, ruin-crowned hill at the mouth of Wady Abu el ᶜAmîs. Modern Tiberias occupies but a small area of the great Roman city which once flourished here. The ancient walls can still be traced, and included within them was the lofty hill to the southwest, then the Acropolis. Founded some five or six years before the ministry of Jesus, on a contaminated site, and populated by Antipas with all the riff-raff he could induce to go there, it was for years considered unclean by the Jews. Subsequently the irony of fate made it one of their most sacred cities, the seat of the Sanhedrin, and a great rabbinical school. Later it was a stronghold of militant Latin Christianity against the Saracen. Now it is a poor, squalid, but nevertheless "holy" city of the Jews—the last surviving "town" of this once densely populated lake shore. South of Tiberias, near the present hot baths, was probably the ancient Hammath (Josh. 19:35), and certainly the Emmaus of Josephus.[4] At the southwest corner is a *tell* known as

[1] See the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, 1905, p. 363.

[2] A limnogram extending over ten hours, taken by the present writer at the Lake of Galilee, was recently exhibited by Professor Chrystal in a lecture at the Royal Institution of Great Britain as a fine example of a seiche.

[3] Josephus, *Vita*, 12.

[4] *Ant.*, XVIII, ii, 3; *B. J.*, IV, i, 3.

S'nn en Nabra which appears to be the site of Sinnabris; while upon the extensive level hill at the mouth of the Jordan known as el Kerak we must recognize the site of Taricheae, a city greater than Tiberias itself, which at one time gave its name to the whole lake. Upon the lofty heights just south of the Hieromax (the modern Yarmuk) the great Greek city of Gadara (now the squalid village of M^{c}Keis) overlooked the lake and all its surroundings. Nearer the shore and half-way up the eastern

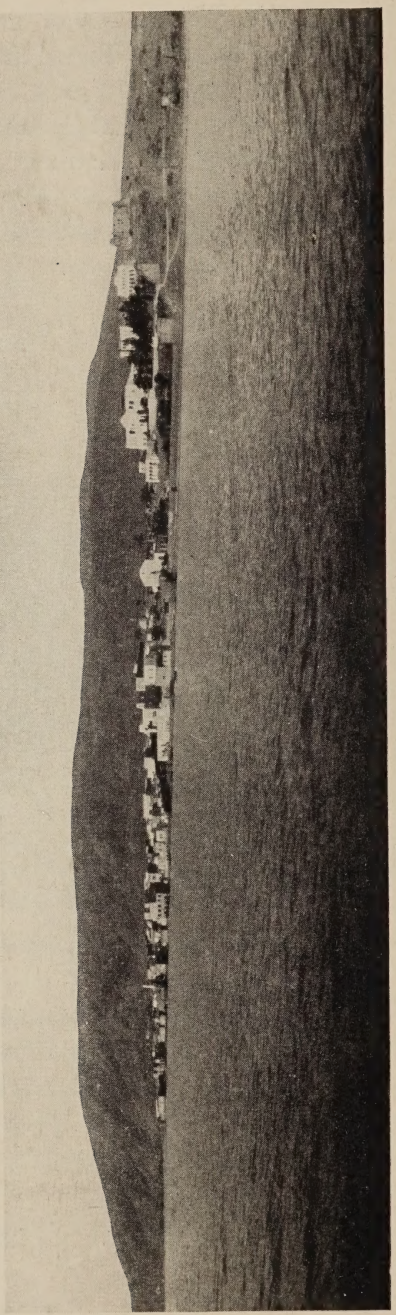
EL MEJDEL, THE PROBABLE SITE OF MAGDALA

coast lay Gamala, built upon a strange camel-shaped hill known as Kulât el Husn, a place celebrated for its extraordinary natural strength and the bravery of its inhabitants.[1] Somewhat inland from this hill, between it and the modern village of Fîk (the Aphek of I Kings 20:26), is the shapeless ruin of Susîyeh, the Susitha (סוסיתא) of Talmudic writers[2] and therefore the Hippos of Josephus, a Greek city which gave its name (Hippene) to the whole district.[3] Some two miles north

[1] *B. J.*, I, iv, 8; and IV, chap. i.

[2] *Bereshith Rabbah*, chaps. xxxi, xxxvii, etc.

[3] *B. J.*, III, iii, 1.



TIBERIAS FROM THE LAKE

of the Kulʿat el Husn the hills, which farther south are some distance from the shore, approach within 40 feet of the lake; and here, on the high ground, is the ruined site of Kersa, or, as Schumacher[1] calls it, Kurse, which certainly represents the ancient Gerasa, attached to which was the country of the Gerasenes[2] (*R. V.*, Mark 5:1; Luke 8:25), where the incident of the swine occurred. Origen[3] states that a city of this name existed on the shores of the lake and that near it was a precipice down which the swine ran.

The circuit of the lake thus included in New Testament times a considerable variety of elements. There was the great Roman city of Tiberias, pagan and disreputable, yet for a time the capital of the district. On hill tops overlooking the lake were the free Greek cities of Gadara, Hippos, and (apparently) Gerasa, intensely anti-Jewish and hated in turn by the Jews. In the midst of gentile elements rose Taricheae and Gamala, each destined shortly to be the scene of a bloody tragedy in the Jewish war of independence. Around two-thirds of the circumference memory calls back the sound of the clash of arms and discordant cries of the conquerors and the conquered, while in times of peace almost everywhere incense rises to heathen gods. Only upon the quiet, fertile, northern shore in the unfortified Jewish towns, within sight of the "kingdoms of this world and the glory of them," one must ever think of those quiet and beneficent labors of Him who from this one district gathered out a large proportion of those who are immortal as the ambassadors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

[1] *The Jaulan.*

[2] See art. on "Gerasenes" in *Encyclopaedia Biblica.* Gerasa is there considered more probable than Gergesa.

[3] In *Ev. Joann.*, 6:24.

THE INLAND FISHERIES OF GALILEE

CHAPTER II

THE INLAND FISHERIES OF GALILEE[1]

The lakes of Galilee have been famous for their plentiful supplies of fish all through history. In the Roman period fishing boats on the larger lake appear to have been numbered by the hundred; now there are not many over a score. During my residence in Safed my attention was very naturally called to the fishing industry in which many of my neighbors were interested. Probably no place in Northern Palestine, off the sea coast, receives so large and so regular a supply of fish as the mountain town of Safed. In the cool weather it comes from the whole northern shore of the Lake of Galilee and from the little lake el Hūleh; but in the summer, chiefly from el Bataihah, the great marshy delta of the Jordan at the northeastern corner of the Lake of Galilee. From here, processions of mules, loaded with boxes of fish, make the five hours' journey to Safed at least once, and often twice, in the twenty-four hours—except during the Sabbath. It is indeed, as the last proviso implies, particularly for the Jews that the fish is brought. So great is the demand that fish is often cheaper and more plentiful in Safed than at Tiberias, although it is Tiberias men that do all the fishing.

The Government tax on all fish taken from the lake and from the adjoining Jordan, is one-fifth. Like all the taxes this is "farmed out," and the *ʿAshshār* (tax collector) pays, it is said, 1,000 Turkish pounds every three years for his right of taking one-fifth of all the fish caught. In addition to this, the owner of el Bataihah, ʿAbd er Rahmân, a Pasha in Damascus, has private rights, and a Safed Jew paid him 200 napoleons[2] annually for the exclusive control of all the fishing there. He engages the fishermen and pays them a percentage on all the fish sold.[3] The Hūleh and ʿAin Mellāhah fishing rights are

[1] Almost the whole of this article appeared in the *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund.* It is reprinted here by permission of the Committee of the Fund.

[2] The previous three years the rent was only 180 napoleons.

[3] Two piastres for each *roṭl* of the best fish and one piastre per *roṭl* for the inferior kinds. A piastre is a little less than two pence, English money.

under the *tchiflik*—the management of the Sultan's private property. There are no government taxes, and the fishing rights are let annually to a Christian for 260 napoleons. He engages his own fishermen—from the Bedawin in the neighborhood—and pays all expenses.[1]

Fishing off Tiberias is only followed to a considerable extent during the winter and early spring months. It is not nearly so important as that along the northern shore from Mejdel to el Bataihah. The bay at et Tabighah is, during the early months of spring, a wonderful place for fish; they swarm there, attracted by the copious hot springs which, loaded with vegetable débris, here pour their waters into the lake. For about three months—mid-January to mid-April—the fishermen make this their headquarters, erecting a few tents or reed huts on the shore, close to the mills. While the water a few yards out teems with larger fish, the shallows close in shore swarm with small fish-fry.

The fishing off el Bataihah is by far the most valuable on the whole lake. Here, close to the mouth of the Jordan, as well as in the waters of that river, fish may be taken all the year round—though varying in kind according to the season. The fishermen, whose homes are in Tiberias, make temporary reed-mat shelters for themselves while on shore, beside which they spread out their nets along the beach to dry (cf. Ezek. 24:5, 14; 47:10). It is interesting to notice that this, the richest fishing-ground, is close to the ruin et Tell, which is generally acknowledged to be the site of the village of Bethsaida, the "place of fishing," which, according to Josephus, was afterward officially renamed Julias.[2]

At el Hūleh and the ᶜAin el Mellāhah stream (which flows into this lake) fishing is carried on by very primitive methods. The Bedawin fishermen occupy a mat hut, made of papyrus, on the western shore, close to the Jewish settlement of Ezbaid.[3] During the day they catch fish by means of the "cast net," as will be described; but at night they employ boats and use the *m'baṭṭen*.[4]

From the Lake of Galilee fish is carried fresh to Safed, Nazareth, and other places in Galilee, and is dried and salted for the Damascus and Jerusalem markets. From el Hūleh and ᶜAin el Mellāhah fish

[1] This was in 1907.

[2] See chap. v.

[3] Really, *ez zubaid*.

[4] More correctly written *mŭbaṭṭen*.

is sent to Safed, to Merj ᶜAyûn (five or six hours away), and to Damascus. In the case of the latter special precautions have to be taken; the fish (*musht* and *barbût*) is caught toward the evening, is sorted out on reed mats, and packed and dispatched the same night. Salted fish is also sent from here to Zahleh and other places in the Lebanon. During the summer months fish cannot be sent, in a fresh state, far from the lakes; most of it goes to Safed, and in this season almost all of it consists of carp and barbel.

The average price of the best fish in Safed is from ten to fourteen piastres a *roṭl*, or about four pence a pound. Catfish, which is always cheaper, may be as low as a third of this when there is a glut in the market.

Almost all the fish are caught by means of nets, of which there are three kinds: the "cast net" or *shabakeh*, the "draw net" or *jarf*, and the *m'baṭṭen*. The old-fashioned method of poisoning fish is still at times resorted to by amateurs. At Tiberias crumbs of bread mixed with cochineal (which appears to be a fish poison) are thrown on the water, and I am told that even ᶜ*arak* (spirits of wine) is also sometimes used. The Arabs at ᶜAin el Mellāhah sometimes capture the fish in that pool by means of poison, and they also, when the weather is getting colder, and the fish by instinct make for the deeper waters, stretch nets across the stream and make big hauls. Yet another method employed at times at Tiberias is that of using a weighted string of sharp, unbaited hooks which are rapidly drawn through the water, and, if skill is used, often come up with several impaled victims. This may have been the method referred to in Matt. 17:27. It is, however, the regular fishing with nets which alone is of commercial importance.

The "cast net" is a small circular net with small bars of lead attached all round its margin: to the center is usually fixed a small cord. It is apparently the ἀμφίβληστρον of Matt. 4:18, and Mark 1:16. Three sizes are used, differing in wideness of spread and in fineness of mesh. The smallest size, used for *sardinnen*, is known as *el mukheiyer;* the second, the most commonly used, is called *esh shabakeh* (a name usually applied by the public to all "cast nets") or ᶜ*Ashranēyeh Kaʃāʃeh;* while the largest, used only in midwinter for the largest *mushṭ*, is called ᶜ*Ashranēyeh Sarosēyeh*, or simply

es sarosēyeh. It may be of interest to give the dimensions of samples of the two latter which I have recently measured. The *shabakeh* measured in length, from the center cord attachment to the lead weights, 11 feet 6 inches. When spread out fully the circumference was 39 feet 3 inches. There were seventeen meshes to the lineal foot. The *sarosēyeh* measured: length, 11 feet 6 inches; circumference, 61 feet 4 inches; mesh, ten to a lineal foot. The method of using the "cast net" is as follows: The fisherman carefully arranges the net on his right arm, the weights hang free but the net is wound up. As the fine mesh gets readily in a tangle he critically examines the weights to see that none are out of place. He then advances into the water up to his waist, having gathered his scanty garments well out of the way; he cautiously looks around till he sees some indication of fish—a few fins showing, a troubled surface, or a fish jumping—and then with a bold swing of his arm he deftly lets his net fly through the air so that it spreads out flat and descends into and through the water with its weighted edges in a complete level circle. As it does so, it necessarily shuts in all the fish in the area over which it falls. The fisherman knows the lie of the net by means of the cord in his hand. He then walks over the net, feeling with his feet the nature of its contents, and flattening it down in his progress so that the fish become well entangled in its meshes. He now draws it up again by means of the center cord, and as he carefully twists it up over his arm he disentangles the captives one by one. He may in this way capture several dozen fish in one throw, indeed (specially when the net is used in conjunction with the *jarf*, as described below), so great may be the mass of fish that the net cannot be raised but must be dragged on shore. It is seldom that the skilled man casts with no result whatever. It is delightful, as I have repeatedly done both along the north shore of the Lake of Galilee and at el Hūleh, to watch the skill and precision with which the net is flung.

The *jarf* or "drag net" is as much as 400 meters long. In mesh it is as fine as the *shabakeh.* It is used at the lake chiefly during daylight, but along the Bay of Akka many of these nets are employed after sunset with lanterns and torches to illuminate the scene. The net is paid out of a boat in an immense semicircle, the two ends being near the shore. The upper side floats by means of corks, the lower

is kept down by small lead weights. As soon as the net is in position the men on the shore commence the process of hauling it in. Four men, if possible, take charge of each extremity; they have long ropes fixed to the lower and upper corners so that they drag in the bottom at the same time as the top. In dragging in the net they fix the ropes to their belts, and in order that a steady and uninterrupted pull may be kept up each man nearest the landward end of the ropes, as soon as there is room, leaves off his hold there and runs forward to seize the ropes at the net-end as they come in shore. The fishermen consider it a matter of importance that when once the net has commenced to come in, there should be no pause in its progress. As the center parts begin to come into shallow water some of the fishermen assist its progress by jumping or diving into the water and lifting the weighted lower side over the large stones. This is particularly necessary at Tiberias, where there are many large stones all over the bottom. Finally the net reaches the shore, having "gathered of every kind" (Matt. 13:48). Clearly the net (σαγήνη) here described was the draw net.

The *m'baṭṭen* (really مُبطّن, meaning "lined," a word used for the lining of clothes) is a compound net about 200 meters long, made of three nets of equal length and breadth all fixed to one suspending rope. The two outermost nets have a wide, that in the center a fine, mesh. Like the *jarf*, one long side is floated near the surface by means of corks, while the other is weighted down with lead. In order to distinguish its situation in the dusk or dark a floating empty petroleum tin is fixed to the two ends. A fish coming in contact with the net passes easily through the nearest outer net, but the middle one he, in his struggles, pushes in front of him, *through the meshes of the third net*, in such a way that when he tries to retreat he finds himself hopelessly entangled in a kind of bag of netting—covering his broad end.

The *m'baṭṭen* can be laid in any depth of water as it does not touch the bottom, but, as a matter of experience, the fishermen find that the biggest hauls are made usually not far from the shore. The net is paid out in a long line parallel to the shore; the fishermen then row their boats slowly along its whole length and back again—particularly on the landward side—in order to frighten the fishes. If there is a large catch, the net, weighted down with its contents, sinks in the middle. When this happens it is immediately hauled on board

the two boats.[1] If there is no such result, the net may be left out from the middle of the night till daybreak. Before paying out the nets, the fishermen are often able, even in the darkest nights, to locate a shoal of fish by the sound of the fishes opening and shutting their mouths at the surface.

Off Tiberias yet another method has been adopted in recent years. It was found that the *musht*, who are a very wily fish and the most difficult to catch, frequently managed to jump over the floating edge of the draw-net after they had been surrounded, so a new device was contrived. Two boats, as usual, act in concert, their movements being directed by a man stationed on a point of the shore high above the water, who, from this vantage ground, is able to detect the presence of a shoal of *musht*. Proceeding to the spot indicated, the fishermen of one boat quickly drop the long *jarf* in a circle round the shoal, while those in the second boat pay out an *m'batten*—without its lead weights—all round the circle, keeping it stretched out flat on the level of the water by means of wooden rods, and loosely fixing it at points to the floating edge of the *jarf*. The *musht*, finding the circle closing in round them, jump the edge and land on, and are entangled in, this floating net. The *jarf* may now be dragged to land. As the bottom of the lake is full of great stones, some of the fishermen dive in and assist the progress of the weighted side over these obstructions. When the circle is very full of fish the *shabakeh* is used again and again to partially clear the *jarf* by securing the inclosed *musht;* under such circumstances this net is often brought up an almost solid mass of fish.

The Tiberias fishermen are quite a class by themselves; fine, stalwart men, mostly Moslems, with a few Christians. The business is hereditary in certain families. The nets are usually made and mended by the women of their households. Irregular fishing with the "cast net" is carried on by Bedawin living near the Lake of Galilee, and particularly near the Hūleh.

Although it does not do to argue too conclusively from modern customs to the ancient ones, there are one or two which throw some light on the narrative in John, chap. 21. There is, first of all, the unknown Stranger (vs. 4) on the shore who tells the disciples where

[1] In these maneuvers two boats always work together; cf. Luke 5:7.

to cast the net. If then, as now, fishermen were accustomed to have their movements directed from the shore—at times, at any rate—it will explain the fishermen's ready response to the directions. Then, it will be noticed that it is at dawn that the nets, if left out all night, are usually hauled in. The condition of Simon (vs. 7) is readily understood if the fishermen were accustomed to dive into the water to assist the progress of their nets along the bottom; and so, too, his plunging in with his "fisher's coat" to meet his Master, appears, also, all the more natural and in keeping with the surroundings. The fishes described (vs. 11) as "great" would probably be members of the carp (*Cyprinidae*) family, which often exceed two feet in length. These, today, are particularly taken in the "drag net" (vs. 8).

With regard to the varieties of fish it is unnecessary here to give a list of all the forty-three kinds found in the inland waters of Palestine. Many of them are quite small and others extremely rare. I shall here almost exclusively refer to the important food fishes of the two lakes of Galilee and the adjoining streams.

Zoölogically these fishes belong to three families—the *Chromidae*, allied to the wrass; the *Siluridae*, or catfishes; and the *Cyprinidae*, or carps. A small blenny (*Blennius varus*) is also found in the lake, but it is too small to be of commercial importance.

The *Chromidae* are the most characteristic fish of Palestine. In appearance they are somewhat like their allies—the wrass. They are broad from back to belly, but somewhat narrow from side to side. They have a long dorsal fin running the greater part of their length, the front part of which is supported by fifteen or sixteen strong sharp spines, while a broader part behind incloses about a dozen softer and more flexible spines, lying close together. The eight known species are distinguished largely by differences in the numbers of these spines. It is on account of the comb-like back that the fishermen have named this fish mushṭ (مُشّط), a comb. These prickly spines are, no doubt, formidable weapons of defense, and may possibly (though this has never been proved) be poisonous to smaller fish, as is the case with the weaver fish, but they, more than anything else, are the cause of their entanglement in the fine meshes of the fishermen's net. It is the male members of this family of fish which have the remarkable habit of carrying the spawn and the young fry in their mouths until they

develop to quite a considerable size.[1] As the young develop, the cheek pouches become enormously distended, and the unfortunate parent is unable to close its mouth. How it can feed—unless it feeds on its own fry—is a mystery. This phenomenon is very commonly observed with the *kelb* (*Hemichromis sacra*)—indeed, this is the only variety in which I have actually seen it—but it has been described in other species, and is probably, as the fishermen emphatically state, common to all the family. During, or very soon after, the breeding season most of the *musht* disappear entirely from their usual haunts—it seems probable that they take to the depths of the lake. *Musht* of various kinds are very plentiful during the winter and early spring months, particularly immediately after storms, but are very scarce after about May.

With regard to the varieties, zoölogists describe eight species. The fishermen do not make such fine distinctions. The common commercial kinds are *musht abiad*, *musht lubbud*, and *kelb*, or *kuleibeh*. *Musht abiad*, or white *musht* is that known as *Chromis niloticus*, a fish found all over the Jordan system and also in the Nile. Although a very light color, the males, during the breeding season, are considerably darker, with marked spots of a lighter color; it is a very handsome fish and the chief favorite for the table. Well-grown specimens are eight to nine inches long. In addition to color and size, this *musht* is distinguished by a slightly convex forehead and a slightly concave tail.

Musht lubbud is that known scientifically as *Chromis tiberalis*. *Lubbud* is apparently derived from لبد, meaning "to stick together," "to be compact" (hence *lebādeh*, meaning "felt"), and may refer to the extraordinary compact nature of the shoals. Thus Tristram says:[2] "I have seen them in shoals of over an acre in extent, so closely packed that it seemed impossible for them to move, and with their dorsal fins above the water, giving at a distance the appearance of a tremendous shower pattering on one spot of the surface of the glassy

[1] There is a misprint in the *P.E.F. Memoirs*, "Flora and Fauna," p. 166, where it says of these fish-fry that they "do not quit the sheltering cavity till they are about four inches long." This is impossible. They leave the shelter of their fathers' mouths when about the size of a lentil, and apparently *never return*.

[2] "Flora and Fauna," *P.E.F. Memoir*, p. 165.

lake." But others explain it as referring to the habit of this fish to cling to the ground and hide under stones—a meaning equally permissible to the Arabic root. This is the most plentiful of all the *Chromidae*. Of average size, perhaps a little smaller than the first mentioned, it is distinguished from it by a more convex forehead, a darker color, and a slightly convex tail.

The *kelb* ("dog"—a name also applied to the "shark") or *kuleibeh* ("little dog") is the *Hemichromis sacra*. It is a small fish than the two former, from which it is easily distinguished by its narrower shape (from back to belly), its concave forehead and ugly mouth. It is less prized as food than these others, and is caught also slightly later in the season. It is in best condition, however, in the winter, when it fattens on the *sardinnen*, among which it plays havoc. It breeds mong the flags and bulrushes, and so the males, doing their parental duties, often fall victims to the net.

Some of the smaller *Chromidae* are called *ᶜadadi*, but I find a good deal of disagreement among the fishermen as to what species should be so called. The *Memoirs* are, however, I believe, correct in saying it is the Arabic name for the small *mushṭ*, *Chromis Flavii Josephi*, which is distinguished by yellow spots on the anal fin. It is not a table fish. A Bedawy fisherman also told me that he designated one kind as *marmar* (marble), but he could not show me a specimen. I have seen a small *mushṭ* in the pools of ᶜAin el Madawereh and ᶜAin et Tineh with a "marbled" back, which may be the kind referred to, but I have not had the chance of handling it. *Kart* is a name also applied to a small *mushṭ*, "white like silver."

The "catfish" of Galilee—*Clarias macrocanthus*—is known to the fishermen as *barbût*[1] (plural, *barabēt*). This is the fish referred to by Josephus (*B.J.*, III x, §8) under the name Coracinus, as found in the fountain "Caphernaum." It has a great head, ornamented with a row of long and prominent barbels, and when it grows to its full size—four or five feet—is a most formidable-looking beast, and does great destruction among the smaller fish. Such large individuals are rare; specimens caught for eating are usually between two and three feet. They are sold very cheaply, because they are forbidden food to the Jews on account of the absence of scales (Lev. 11:10). They are

[1] The verb *barbût* is a colloquial Arabic word for making a splashing.

sometimes as cheap as four piastres (7½*d.*) for a *roṭl* (= 5 lbs. 10 ozs.), or more than 1½ lbs. for 2*d.* This is about a third of the price of *mushṭ*. For the table they are usually cut transversely, and fried with butter or oil. They are excellent eating. From the fact that they are not *kosher*, i. e., "pure," they are thought to be the "bad" fish of Matt. 13:48, which "they cast away." The habits of the catfish are in many ways remarkable. They are able to survive a long time on dry land; they commonly reach Safed alive. This is due to their curious arborescent gills, which do not collapse when out of the water, and which, as long as they remain damp, carry on the process of respiration in the air. Shortly before the breeding season these creatures become very lively: I have seen numbers of them tumbling about like small porpoises on the surface of the lake—near its middle—with a crowd of noisy gulls circling over them. Although they undoubtedly creep up the warm streams, and along the irrigation canals—crossing at times even patches of dry land—the fishermen say they do not (as Tristram states) breed in these places but, in the Lake of Galilee at any rate, in the deeper water: they never see the small fry of the *barbût*. In the Hūleh they disappear altogether into the papyrus swamps for four months after May. When seized the catfish gives a curious squeak, something like a cat.

The *Cyprinidae*, or carps, are a large family, and twenty-three different species have been described as occurring in Palestine. Of these the most important food-fishes are the *kersīn*, the *abu kisher*, the *ḥafāfi*, the *ḥafāfi bandûk*, and the *sardinnen*.

The *kersīn*, known also as *abu būz*,[1] is scientifically *Barbus longiceps*. It is a handsome trout-like fish, often over two feet long. Like all the carps, its upper jaw is provided with small barbules, and the corners of its mouth with larger ones. It is one of the best fish in the district for eating, its special attraction on the table being its absence of the many small bones which make the eating of *mushṭ* such a mixed pleasure.

Closely allied to this, but considerably more plentiful, is the *binny*,[2] or *abu kisher* (also known as *kishereh*). The latter names, meaning "scaly," are given on account of this fish's remarkably large scales. The specimens which come to the market are usually somewhat

[1] Lit., "father of a mouth." [2] Lit., "coffee brown."

smaller than the *kersīn*, but it grows, I believe, at times to the same length as the latter. Zoölogically it is known as *Barbus canis*.

The *ḥafāfi* (*Capoeta damascīna*) is essentially a river fish. It is found in the Jordan, or near its mouth, as well as in rivers all over the land. It is, as its Latin name implies, common at Damascus, in the Barada River. Specimens which I got there some years ago measured one foot, and this is about the average size. This fish is yellowish in color, particularly on the belly, and in flavor is inferior to the two carps previously mentioned.

The *Capoeta syriaca*, a closely allied species common in all the rivers of the Jordan system, is known as *ḥafāfi bandūk* or "bastard" *ḥafāfi*, the fishermen thinking that the fish is the product of the interbreeding of the true *ḥafāfi* with some other species. Another *bandūk* is *Capoeta socialis*. The three species are not distinguished in trade. Yet a fourth kind is kept by the inhabitants of the village of Deishun in the village fountain: it also occurs in a neighboring semi-underground pool. It is known as *Capoeta fratercula*.

The fishermen also describe *banādīk* (bastards) of the *kersīn* and the *abu kisher*, the former with a head like a *kersīn* and scales like the *ḥafāfi*, and the latter with head like the *abu būz* but scales like *abu kisher;* but I am very doubtful whether these are really distinct species and among a considerable number I have examined, I have never found one.

Mention must also be made of the *sardinnen* (*Alburnus sillah*), a small species about six inches in length, which is at times caught in great numbers in the lake, near the shore, although the greater part of the year it is scarcely met with, probably because it keeps to the deep waters. The Arabic name is a modern one, and clearly suggested by their resemblance in size and shape to sardines. They are eaten fresh, fried, and when properly cooked are excellent, but they are not successfully pickled. Attempts have been made in recent years to prepare them like true sardines, but without much success. Nevertheless, it would appear not improbable that they were the sardines which we know were prepared here and were even sent to Rome. Perhaps they were the טריח of the Talmud, and the two "small fishes" (ὀψάριον) of John 6:19.[1] A still smaller fish of the same order,

[1] See Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. I, pp. 682, 683.

known to the natives as *libbeh*, but scientifically as *Descognathus lamta*, swarms in the hot springs at *eṭ Ṭabighah*. It is a pretty minnow-like fish, and may easily be caught in countless numbers with a muslin hand-net, but is too small to be of use for food. In the similar warm springs near the Dead Sea, e. g., ʿAin Feshkhah, another little fish, the *Cyprinodon dispar*, of the family of the "toothed carps" (*Cyprinodontidae*) occurs in numbers equally great.

GENNESARET

CHAPTER III

GENNESARET[1]

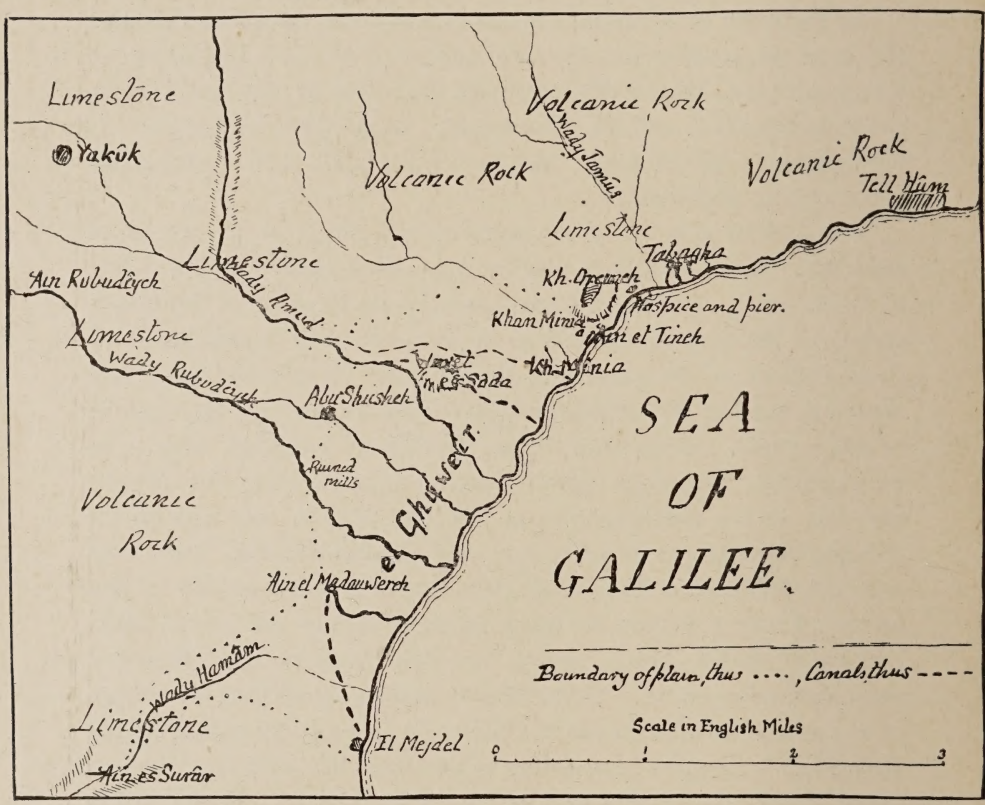
As the Lake of Tiberias is in the eyes of many lovers of Palestine the most picturesque and the most sacred of all spots in Galilee, so Gennesaret is of those hallowed shores the fullest of holy associations, the most beautiful, and the most fertile. In no place can the Savior's life be more vividly pictured; nowhere do the lake's natural attractions stand out so prominently.

The earliest mention of the name is in I Macc. 11:67, where we read that "as for Jonathan and his host, they pitched at the waters of Gennesar." This form Gennesar is found in many of the manuscripts of the gospels, as well as in Josephus, and is considered by good authorities the nearest to the original. The meaning is very doubtful, but the first syllable appears to be the Hebrew גַּן, a garden or park, which would, from the descriptions of Josephus, seem to be very suitable. From the New Testament data it is clear that Gennesaret was at the northern end of the lake and to the west of the Jordan (Matt. 14:34; Mark 6:53). The Talmud identifies Gennesaret with the Chinnereth of the Old Testament, i. e., with the city of that name. From Josephus we learn that this region was thirty stadia by twenty stadia, that is, nearly four miles long by more than two and a half miles broad. Gennesaret is famous for all time on account of its connection with the life of Christ; no spot can have been oftener visited in his frequent journeyings to and from his "own city," Capernaum, during the stirring days of his public ministry. In this neighborhood were done most of his mighty works. The references in the gospels are but incidental; for a description of this district we must refer to Josephus, who in his somewhat exaggerated language describes it as a veritable paradise. He writes (*War*, III, x, 8):

> Extending along the lake of Gennesaret and bearing also its name, lies a tract of country, admirable both for its natural properties and its beauty. Such is the

[1] The writer would express his indebtedness to Professor William Arnold Stevens, of Rochester Theological Seminary, to whose article on "Gennesaret," which appeared in the *Baptist Quarterly Review*, October, 1886, the present writer owes much.

fertility of the soil that it rejects no plant and accordingly all are here cultivated by the husbandman; for so genial is the air that it suits every variety. The walnut, which delights beyond other trees in a wintry climate, grows here luxuriantly, together with the palm tree, which is nourished by the heat; and near to these are figs and olives, to which a milder atmosphere has been assigned. One



GENNESARET

The alluvial plain of el Ghuweir and the adjacent region.

might style this an ambitious effort of nature, doing violence to herself in bringing together plants of discordant habits, and an amiable rivalry of the seasons, each, as it were, asserting her right to the soil. For it not only possesses the extraordinary virtue of nourishing fruits of opposite climes, but also maintains a continual supply of them. Thus it produces those most royal of all, the grape and the fig, during ten months without intermission, while the other varieties ripen the year round.

Although today, in its sad neglect, Gennesaret produces no walnuts, grapes, or olives, and but a few indifferent figs, yet there is no spot in all Palestine so manifestly and so richly endowed with the gifts of nature, nor any place on all the lake where its unchangeable beauties can be seen to more advantage. The deep, rich alluvial soil, the abundant streams, the fostering climate, and the fair vision of surrounding beauty all remain: it only needs that the hand of man should be stretched forth as a blessing and not as a blight to make the place once again "blossom as the rose."

It is universally accepted that the plain known as el Ghuweir, the little *Ghor* (the Jordan Valley as a whole being *el Ghor*), is the "Plain of" Gennesaret. It must, however, be remembered that the insertion of the qualifying epithet, "plain," is an after-invention, unauthorized by either the New Testament or Josephus. It is impossible that this region, producing olives, grapes, and figs, could have been only an irrigated plain, for these fruits are never produced in such conditions. It will, however, be convenient at the outset to make the plain, el Ghuweir, the center of the topographical description.

El Ghuweir is an alluvial plain, a kind of delta, formed by the united deposits of the streams which have made and are still deepening the valleys opening into it. As will be seen by the plan on the preceding page, a large area of Galilee is drained by these streams. Those who have traversed the deep chasms of the Wady el Hamam and the Wady el ᶜAmûd must realize the enormous amount of sediment which, during long ages, has been carried down in the process of their erosion. Such alluvial soil is proverbially fertile, but here the sediment is of peculiarly rich quality, being the production of both basaltic and limestone rocks. The three great basins which drain into the plain are named after the gorges through which their streams reach the level: the Hamam, the Rubudîyeh, and the ᶜAmûd.

Taking these in order from the south, we deal first with the Wady el Hamam. This drains the volcanic plateau of Hattin, so called after a village beautifully situated below and to the north of the well-known Horns of Hattin. An abundant spring bursts forth from under a precipitous limestone rock southwest of the village. This and a smaller spring lower down the valley are in the dry season entirely used up in the irrigation of extensive gardens. Immediately to the

north of Hattin, beyond the northern limit of the lava, a small spring, ʿAin el Hamam, breaks forth in the bottom of the valley and irrigates some fruit gardens. A little lower down, just below the ruins of Irbid,

GENNESARET

The district is shaded; the deeply shaded part is el Ghuweir. The whole basin draining into the plain is inclosed within the dark dotted line.

the ancient Arbela, water breaks forth at one or two spots in the valley bed, but only during and immediately after rain is there any continuous stream. As we descend the valley the scenery becomes increasingly striking. The path, which is in places almost impassable on

account of great fallen bowlders, enters a gorge between massive cliffs, in places perpendicular, more than a thousand feet high. In the precipices to the right are the remains of a great cavern fortress—known today as Kulʿat ibn Maʿan—which in both Jewish and Arab times has been a refuge for robbers. Herod the Great[1] broke up a nest of robbers here by letting soldiers down from the cliffs above in cages: this also would appear to be the "cave of Arbela" which Josephus fortified.[2] Today the great griffin vultures circle around and around their nests on its inaccessible ledges. When the narrow gorge commences to open out, there breaks forth at the foot of the northern cliffs a copious spring known as ʿAin Surar. Its waters are used for irrigating some gardens lower down the valley, and what remains is conducted by a small canal in a direction due east toward Mejdel, to be distributed over some vegetable gardens. None of the water from the Wady el Hamam reaches the lake. The old channel is not only dry but in places actually filled up.

The next wady, the Rubudîyeh, commences its course in some copious springs near the village of Farradeh. It drains the eastern end of the Plain of Rameh, and for a couple of miles it is perennially filled with a copious millstream from ʿAin et Tabil. It runs a course two-thirds of a circle around the lofty village of Mughar el Hazzûr, being here called Wady Sellameh. Below Khurbet Sellameh the wady is dry most of the year to within about four miles of the lake. Here there bursts forth an abundant spring, ʿAin Rubudîyeh. After gushing out of a rock and descending in a cascade forty feet, it gives rise to a stream large enough to work several mills, besides irrigating a considerable area of the open valley—a most charming spot. The stream bed again narrows as the water forces itself through an outcrop of lava which has, in prehistoric times, flowed into this valley. About three miles above the lake it gives off a large conduit on its northern side, which runs to the mill situated on the low hill of Abu Shusheh. The main stream plunges down a somewhat deep and stony bed, and, after passing the ruins of some mills, enters el Ghuweir and runs a

[1] Josephus, *War*, I, 16:2–4.

[2] *Life*, §37. These caves are also referred to in I Macc. 9:2, and Josephus, *Antiq.*, XII, 11:1. They were also fortified during the Crusades. The existing ruined walls, vaults, and stairs belong to this period.

sluggish course to the lake. After heavy rains the stream at the ford near the sea is comparatively wide and deep, reaching above a horse's girth. The Abu Shusheh millstream pours down from the mill through a great mass of rank vegetation, and after crossing the Tiberias-Safed highroad in several streamlets its waters unite into a small brook which enters the lake north of the Rubudîyeh main stream.

The basin of Wady el ᶜAmūd is the third and greatest area draining into el Ghuweir. This remarkable valley takes its rise near the village of Meiron on the eastern slopes of Jebal Jermak. It receives the drainage of the east side of the whole mountain range from Jermak (the highest mountain in Palestine, 3,934 feet high) to Jebelat el ᶜArus. A northern branch of the valley comes from ᶜAin Jinn, a copious, and at times intermittent, spring. Tributaries to this northern arm carry down the drainage of part of the volcanic plateau of Merj el Jish and at neighboring valleys. In the winter great bodies of water descend to the main wady from the Safed district to the east, and from around Jebel el Bellaneh on the west. Although liable to fluctuation, the stream in this valley is perennial and abundant. The upper part is known as Wady et Tawahin (the Valley of the Mills), because of the great number of mills there. Part of it is also known, particularly to the Safed people, as Wady Leimon, because of the extensive and beautiful orange and lemon plantations there situated. For miles the deep valley-bottom presents a scene of verdure and cultivation such as is seldom seen in Palestine. As it approaches the lake the valley greatly narrows and for over a mile the stream traverses a narrow gorge between precipitous limestone cliffs, full of caves. The valley here receives the name Wady el ᶜAmūd. The natives account for the name (the Valley of the Column) by the appearance of the straight and lofty cliffs at its mouth; but Robinson[1] states that he saw a column twenty feet long lying near its entrance, and he ascribed the name to that.

It is necessary to mention here a source of confusion. Some of the Bedawin call this valley, quite incorretly, Wady el Hamam, like the one previously described. The well-known "Rob Roy" MacGregor was led astray by this. He writes:[2] "One of these

[1] *Researches*, Vol. II, p. 402.

[2] *Rob Roy on the Jordan*, 1st ed., p. 367.

(streams), ᶜAin el ᶜAmūd, comes from the south along the Wady Hamam or Vale of Doves, etc."

Where the stream of the ᶜAmūd enters the open plain it is crossed by a modern bridge, and then it traverses the level ground and enters the sea north of the Abu Shusheh millstream. The remains of two considerable irrigation canals north of this stream are plainly visible. One leaves the ᶜAmūd stream just as it emerges from the gorge and, winding northeast across the plain, enters the sea just south of Khurbet Minia. The second leaves the ᶜAmūd a little below the bridge, and runs seaward between the before-mentioned canal and the main stream. Both these canals are in places filled up, and they have not been used in their whole length for years. But it is evident that by their means the plain almost up to Khan Minia has been watered by the northern stream within comparatively recent times. In ancient times all these streams must have been used to fertilize the whole Ghuweir, and probably also the lower slopes of the surrounding hills. Now the water is largely allowed to run to waste.

One stream has been omitted because it arises in the plain itself. Between the Wady el Hamam and the Rubudîyeh streams there arises, close to the Tiberias-Safed road, a copious spring known as ᶜAin el Madauwereh (the Round Spring). It has received this name because it arises within a circular basin some one hundred feet in diameter. The masonry is Arab and the purpose of the basin is, as with similar constructions at Tabighah, to raise the level of the water for irrigation. The water, which has a temperature of 73° F., is ordinarily about three feet deep and swarms with fish. From it a perennial stream runs through a thicket of tangled brushwood to the lake. A conduit from this spring carries its waters, when needed for irrigation, toward Mejdel; indeed it is probable the original purpose of this birket was to carry water into such a canal. The remains of a canal, parallel in parts with the present one, but more carefully constructed, are still visible at a somewhat higher level than that now used.

The plain itself is roughly level and is everywhere intersected by small water channels. Near its center there arises a ragged mass of laval rock—an offshoot of the Rubudîyeh outcrop—called Waᶜret es Sawdah. The plain around Mejdel is cultivated by the Fellahîn of that village; between there and the mouth of Wady ᶜAmūd by Tella-

wīyeh Bedawin; Abu Shusheh is inhabitated by Kharambeh Bedawin; and the rest of the plain is under the control of the Sumeireh. These tribes, though tent-dwelling Arabs, are not true Bedawin because they cultivate the soil like the Fellahîn, which the true nomads never do.

Recently the plain has almost in its entirety passed into the hands of two German Roman Catholic societies. The northern part forms part of the property of the Tabighah Hospice, the southern part belongs to a committee which has purchased a great part of Mejdel and the land adjoining. It is to be hoped that under European control great improvements may occur. At present barley is raised, and on irrigated portions, maize, melons, marrows, tomatoes, peppers, badingan (egg plant[1]), bamiyeh (*Hibiscus esculentus*), etc., are grown; but large areas are given over to thistles and weeds. In early spring it is a brilliant green from end to end. There is a sad lack of trees; only a few prickly acacias (*sidr*) and some stumpy palms remain where once fruit flourished so well. Some of the most fertile corners are near the mouths of the wadies.

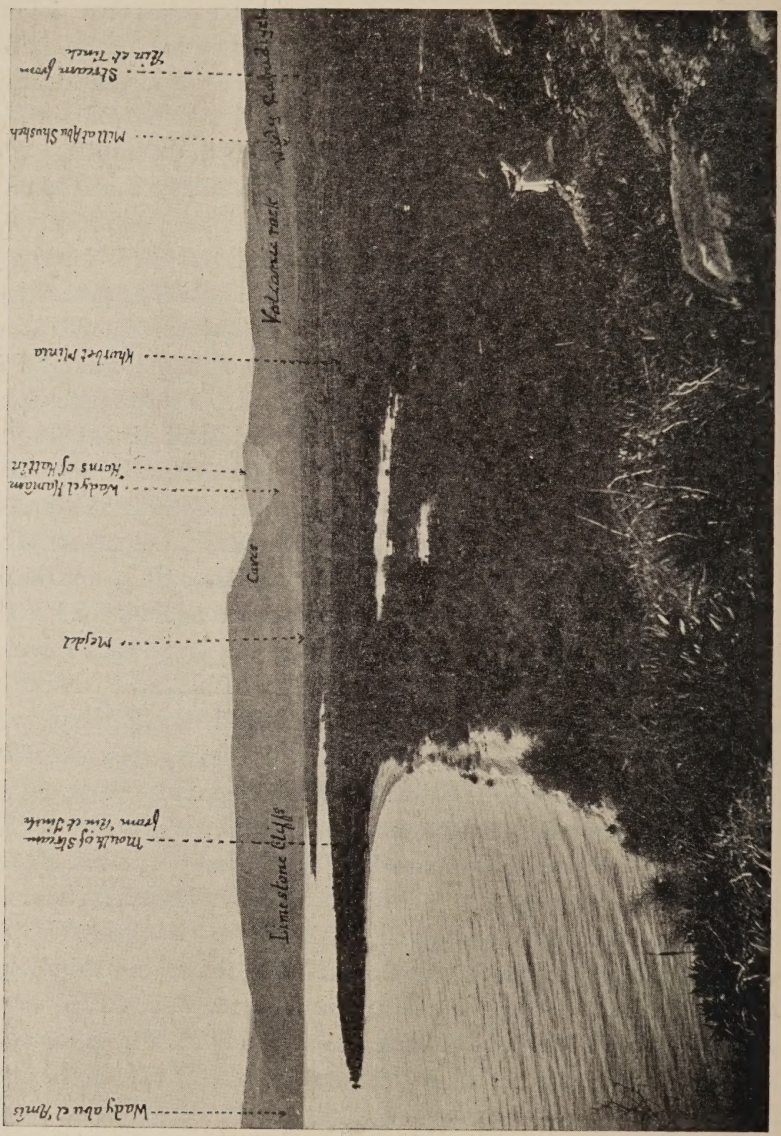
Seaward, el Ghuweir is bounded along most of its length by a clean gravelly beach of tiny stones mixed with, and in parts overspread by, masses of beautiful little shells. Inside the beach is a fringe of oleanders, brambles, and thorny acacia; in places, especially near the stream and canal-mouths, the shrubs extend to the water's edge. This shore path from el Mejdel to Khan Minia is one of the most charming routes in all Palestine. It varies from minute to minute, now among the shrubs, then over an open lawn, along the bank, or across a stream. In the spring every grassy patch is ablaze with flowers, anemones in particular of every hue. The early morning and the hour of sunset are the perfect times. I shall never forget one summer when I, with a party of friends, rode all night by moonlight from Nazareth to Tabighah. We stopped for a midnight meal at Hattin, beneath the precipitous cliffs, and then traversed the wild gorge of the Wady Hamam. As we emerged from its close confines with the full moon behind us, we found the whole plain bathed in the soft light of dawn and the little birds around us commencing their morning songs. As the quickening light momentarily gathered strength over

[1] *Solanum.*

the Hills of Bashan, we rode this path beside the gently rippling waters; we had almost reached our destination, when the sun rose. I have frequently crossed this plain at all times and seasons, but I have always found water in the four streams, from south to north—the ᶜAin el Madauwereh, the Rubudîyeh, the Abu Shusheh millstream, and the Wady ᶜAmūd. Of the four, the Rubudîyeh is much the largest. The stream beds run dry only when a great quantity of water is temporarily diverted for irrigation.

A word may be added about the view landward from the center of the shore. It is very striking. And when we consider that, whatever else has changed, the mountains and valleys remain, this view, once so familiar to the eyes of Jesus, must have a sacred interest. In the distance, to the southwest, one can see, between the two precipitous cliffs of Wady Hattin, the double-peaked summit of an extinct volcano, the Horns of Hattin. To the north of this, due west of where we stand, is a great flat-topped hill of lava. Northeast lie Abu Shusheh and some ruined mills on the Rubudîyeh, behind which is Jebal Hazzūr with the village of Mughar on its southeastern slope. A little to the north of this is Jebel Bellaneh; and behind, the horizon is composed of a long mountain range—the southern line of the Upper Galilean hills, running from Jebelat el ᶜArus to behind Rameh. In front of Jebelat el ᶜArus is the mouth of the Wady ᶜAmūd; and to its right, due north of us, is Safed and the bare, rocky range of Jebel Kanaan. Northeast lies ᶜOreimeh, and behind that many extinct volcanoes of the Jaulan. From some points Hermon is also visible.

This Plain of Gennesaret has always been, as it is today, a great highroad. The famous *Via Maris* passed from Damascus and the north, through the Jaulan, across the Jordan at the Jisr Benat YaᶜKûb, past the Khan Jubb Yusuf, and descended to the plain at the Khan Minia. It then crossed the plain either by the beach road or by another much-used path directly through its center. From the plain it probably ascended the Wady Hamam and thence ran to the coast at Akka. Another branch passed to Egypt via the Khan et Tujjar and the historic pass at Megiddo. And a third road skirted the west shore of the lake and ran south through Beisan, Teyasîr, and Nablus. Today all these routes are in frequent use, but the Wady Abu el ᶜAmîs is preferred to the now almost impassable Wady Hamam.



PLAIN OF GENNESARET AND HORNS OF HATTIN

The traffic across the plain is continuous. The first time I was at Khan Minia, in the spring of 1893, while we sat at lunch, an apparently interminable procession of young camels—many hundreds—filed past us going from the Bedawin lands east of the Jordan to be sold in Egypt. Another time when I crossed the plain, I passed great flocks of sheep in the charge of Kurds from Erzerum in Armenia, moving along the green pastures of Wady Abu el ʿAmîs on their way to Egypt. One of these rough shepherds, knowing scarcely a word of Arabic, was later brought to me in Safed from Khan Jubb Yusuf for medical treatment, having fallen ill so many hundred miles away from home on this long journey. During harvest time caravans of thousands of loaded camels pass along here toward the coast from the great grain-growing plateau of the Hauran. In the olden days when Gennesaret was in its glory how the fame of its beauty and richness must have been carried through the world by the busy traffickers along its high-road!

At the northeast corner of the plain arises the copious fountain, ʿAin et Tineh (Spring of the Fig). Its warm (82° F.) brackish water bursts forth at the base of a precipitous cliff; and after collecting in a small pool, runs along a small lagoon just inside the shingle for one hundred yards. Pool and stream swarm with fish and terrapins; while masses of papyrus and other reeds flourish in the marshy surroundings. There are no remains of any important buildings around, though excavations some years ago revealed foundations of what was considered to be a Roman bath close to the pool. The water rises too near the level of the lake for it ever to have been of much use for irrigation. A little to the north of this spring are the extensive ruins of Khan Minia, now inhabited during certain seasons by people from Rameh, who cultivate the plain for the Tabighah Hospice.

About a quarter of a mile due south of the *khan* are the scattered ruins known as Khurbet Minia. From their appearance, and especially from the characteristics of the broken pottery scattered over the surface, the site may without any hesitation be pronounced entirely Arab. Probably the buildings belong to the same period as the *khan*. The remains are raised very little above the general level of the plain, so that the occupation of the site cannot have been ancient or prolonged. On a careful examination of the site with Mr. Macal-

ister[1] of the Palestine Exploration Fund we could not find a single fragment of pottery earlier than Arab times, while the Arab pottery is abundant.

To the east of Khan Minia is a remarkable hill, el ᶜOreimeh. This hill constitutes the northern limit of el Ghuweir, but not of the district Gennesaret, as I hope to show. Seaward, this hill runs out as a precipitous rocky promontory; while on the side toward the plain

HILL ᶜOREIMEH

The Khurbet ᶜOreimeh appears as a flattened *tell* on the summit. ᶜAin et Tineh lies below the cliff at the extreme right of the picture, and Khan Minia is just outside the picture on the left.

and the *khan* the lower parts present a series of low, ragged, limestone cliffs, with caves. Indeed, on every side, the ascent of the hill is very steep. It is just one of those sites which, all over the land, were in primitive times fortified. On the summit of this hill is a remarkable *tell*, with an artificially leveled top. This mound in the spring is peculiarly conspicuous from a distance on account of its deep green

[1] See *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, April, 1907.

color. The highest part is 198 feet long by 86 feet wide, but on the lower ground to the northeast there are more remains.

The whole of the *tell* is artificial; it is the result of centuries of occupation of the site. Although the ground has been plowed up season after season for long years, fragments of pottery ever come to the surface. A careful examination of these reveals the important

THE ROCK-CUT AQUEDUCT AROUND THE TELL OF ʿOREIMEH
Looking toward the west.

fact that they all go back to Amorite or, at latest, to early Hebrew times. There are absolutely no fragments belonging to the Roman period. The early pottery is so preponderatingly present that it is possible for Mr. Macalister, an expert on Palestine pottery, to say positively[1] that this site cannot have been inhabited in New Testament times, nor for centuries earlier. In the tombs near at hand unbroken Amorite pottery vessels, which we have seen, have also been found.

[1] See *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, April, 1907.

The spot would well repay excavating; excavation has as yet revealed nothing of the Amorite period in Galilee.

Next to this Khurbet el ᶜOreimeh, the most noticeable thing on the hill is the well-known aqueduct. This runs around the semi-precipitous east and southeast sides of the hill where it hangs over the lake, some fifty feet above its surface level. For forty feet the rock cutting may be traced continuously. The shape of the passage is peculiar, being bowed out, as it were, in the middle, as is shown in some degree by the accompanying illustration. At several parts the outer side of the aqueduct, which was evidently built up of masonry, has now disappeared. Extensive surfaces of cement exist and the remains of a built, cemented channel, the continuation of the rock-cut aqueduct toward Khan Minia, can be traced. Just before the rock-cut passage turns northwest after rounding the promontory, there re two breaks in the outer wall which must from the rounded and smooth condition of their surfaces long have been traversed by running water. They appear to have been made to allow the contents of the conduit to descend along a mill shoot, and the foundations of the mills which stood here still may be seen just west of the pool of ᶜAin et Tineh. These outlets and these mills could hardly have been in use until after the aqueduct farther on toward the Khan had fallen into disuse.

Near the eastern end of the rock cutting is a ruined *wely* named Sheikh ᶜAli es Sayyād. Extensive traces of broken masonry aqueduct are visible all the way from the great spring of Birket Sheikh ᶜAli edh Dhaher, across the open valley Khallet es Semak, and then in the direction of the rock cutting, which show beyond doubt that this aqueduct was made to carry the water of this fountain to Khan Minia. As the natives always prefer the lake water for drinking to any of these warm brackish springs, the probability is that the water was primarily a millstream which ran to the Khan. It also went to the settlement now represented by Khurbet Minia, for I believe I can still trace there the remains of mills. It is quite possible, as has been suggested by M. Renan,[1] that the passage was originally constructed not for irrigation but for a road (as it is today) around the face of the cliffs, and only later reconstructed and cemented to make an aqueduct.

[1] *Vie de Jésus*, p. 140; a view also indorsed as probable by the engineers of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

As such, it could have been of use only at the time of the occupation of Khan Minia and the neighboring town now represented by the ruins, Khurbet Minia—an unknown date during the palmy days of the Arab dominion.

On the northeast side of the hill just described is a small plain known as Khallet es Semak, the delta of the Wady Jamūs. This region is generally known as el Tabighah, a name probably derived

DOUBLE OPENING IN BIRKET SHEIKH ʿALI EDH DHAHER
The commencement of the ruined aqueduct is seen in the foreground.

from Heptapegon (seven springs). This spot is notable for its abundant warm springs and its excellent fishing. During February and March it is the best corner in all the lake for fish; they are doubtless attracted by the warm water there, loaded with vegetable débris. Those who maintain that there must have been two towns called Bethsaida—and they are a diminishing number—would locate here Bethsaida west of the Jordan, while recognizing in et Tell, east of the Jordan, the site of Bethsaida Julias. Certainly there is no better

spot for a "house of fishing;" but there are no remains which suggest that any considerable town was there (such remains as are now to be seen at this site belong to ruined Arab mills). This must in any case have been the fishing suburb of Capernaum, and it is probable some fishermen's huts were here. It is at least suggestive that the two spots[1] on the lake where in the spring we find the temporary settlements of fishermen are here and at the Bataihah, that is, at the place where (from Matt. 14:34 and Mark 6:53) many would wish to locate a Bethsaida (house of fishing), and at the place near where we know Bethsaida (Julias) was situated.

There is no more charming spot than this in the whole circuit of the lake. Near the hill el ᶜOreimeh is a small German Roman Catholic hospice, embowered in trees, among which magnificent eucalypti[2] and willows are prominent. On the shore near this is the recently erected wooden pier for the little steamer which has been placed on the lake to take passengers to and from the railway station at es Semakh,[3] near the outlet of the Jordan.

The little open valley is full of cultivation and fertility, thanks to the energetic and wise administration of the successive directors of the hospice. The east end of the valley contains a mass of ruined and half-ruined mills, aqueducts, and running water. Here there burst forth from the ground no less than five springs. One of them, called in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Memoirs* ᶜAin Eyyub (Job's Fountain), is the largest fountain in Galilee. This spring, for which I could find no name locally, arises in a great octagonal tank each side of which is 26 feet. As it stands, the building is the work of a great Arab chieftain and robber, who during the eighteenth century dominated the whole of Galilee from Akka to the Jordan. After him it is named Birket Sheikh ᶜAli edh Dhaher. The foundations are older, better work, probably belonging to the same period as the aqueduct and Khan Minia; that is, to the days when the Arabic power was in its zenith, before the steady decline produced by the

[1] For a detailed account of the "Fisheries of Galilee," see chap. ii.

[2] Australian eucalypti were introduced into Palestine some quarter of a century ago, and now flourish all over the land better than the majority of the native trees.

[3] On the Damascus-Haifa Railway, opened in 1906, a branch of the great Hejaz Railway.

Mongol Turks. The birket, as it stands, is not high enough, by several feet, to lift the water to the level of the aqueduct; and today it is so much out of repair that it does not even raise water to the level for which it was reconstructed.

The present surface of the water is over sixteen feet below the top of the tank. Near the top there are on the southern side two rounded openings cut in stone, through which water entered an aqueduct raised on arches. But for long years it has not attained this level. The aqueduct is now ruined and the mill has disappeared. The stream pours out under a platform inside the tank. To this platform it is now possible to descend by a stone staircase and gaze into the clear waters of the pool. The water is 86.5° F., and the pool—in places ten feet deep—is a veritable aquarium of fish, purple and yellow crabs, crayfish, and mud-turtles. The water pouring out of the side of this pool still works a mill, and as it ramifies over the ground supports a mass of tangled rank vegetation. As it cools it deposits quantities of brownish, stalagmitic limestone which coats the sides of both aqueduct and mill.

Two other springs have been inclosed: One, Hammam Eyyub (Job's bath), rises within a ruined tower a few yards to the east of the birket just described; its water is conducted by a small aqueduct to water the property of the hospice. The other, Tannur Eyyub[1] (Job's oven), lies nearer the shore a little farther east. Here the water rises in a small circular pool, perhaps four feet deep, within a ruined tower. Jewish pilgrims are accustomed to take a bath in this pool on their way to and from Jerusalem. Two other springs also arise amid the vegetation around. The whole of this Tabighah district is one of present fertility and greater latent possibilities. It contains the largest spring in Galilee, one-half equal in volume to the well-known source of the Jordan at Banias, as well as four or five more. The bay is the finest fishing ground on the lake. The district is separated from the plain of el Ghuweir by a hill which in the days of Josephus must have been under cultivation, perhaps bearing those very vineyards, orchards, and groves of which he speaks. Viewed from a little way out on the lake, the two plains appear as one. And I

[1] In addition to Job's spring, Job's bath, Job's oven, we have on the hill nearby Mugharet Eyyub (Job's cave), where according to tradition he lived.

am quite of the opinion, as is suggested by Professor Stevens,[1] that in ancient times Gennesaret must necessarily have included the whole. The measurements given by Josephus will easily allow of this, while the extreme measurements of el Ghuweir are only about two and three-fourths miles long by one and one-half miles broad. The region is very definitely bounded to the south by the close approach of the hills to the sea near Mejdel, while to the east beyond the Tabighah springs the hills again approach the shore and leave no level plain of any size.

The description of the products of this region necessitates the inclusion in it of not only the well-watered valleys opening into it, but also a considerable margin of fertile and at that time terraced hillside around. In the whole of this district, with the exception of Mejdel, usually supposed to be Magdala, there are no ruins marking the sites of any towns or villages which could have flourished there in New Testament times. Such sites do not vanish into thin air; even if no walls remain, pottery fragments are always to be found. On the top of the hill west of Tabighah we find Khurbet el ᶜOreimeh, marking the site of a town which flourished and perished long before those days; while at Khurbet Minia we have considerable remains of an Arab occupation some centuries afterward. The whole area would appear, as we gather from Josephus, to have been devoted to a great garden and orchard; with of course the scattered huts and shanties of those whose duty it was to watch over the produce.

[1] *Loc. cit.*

CAPERNAUM

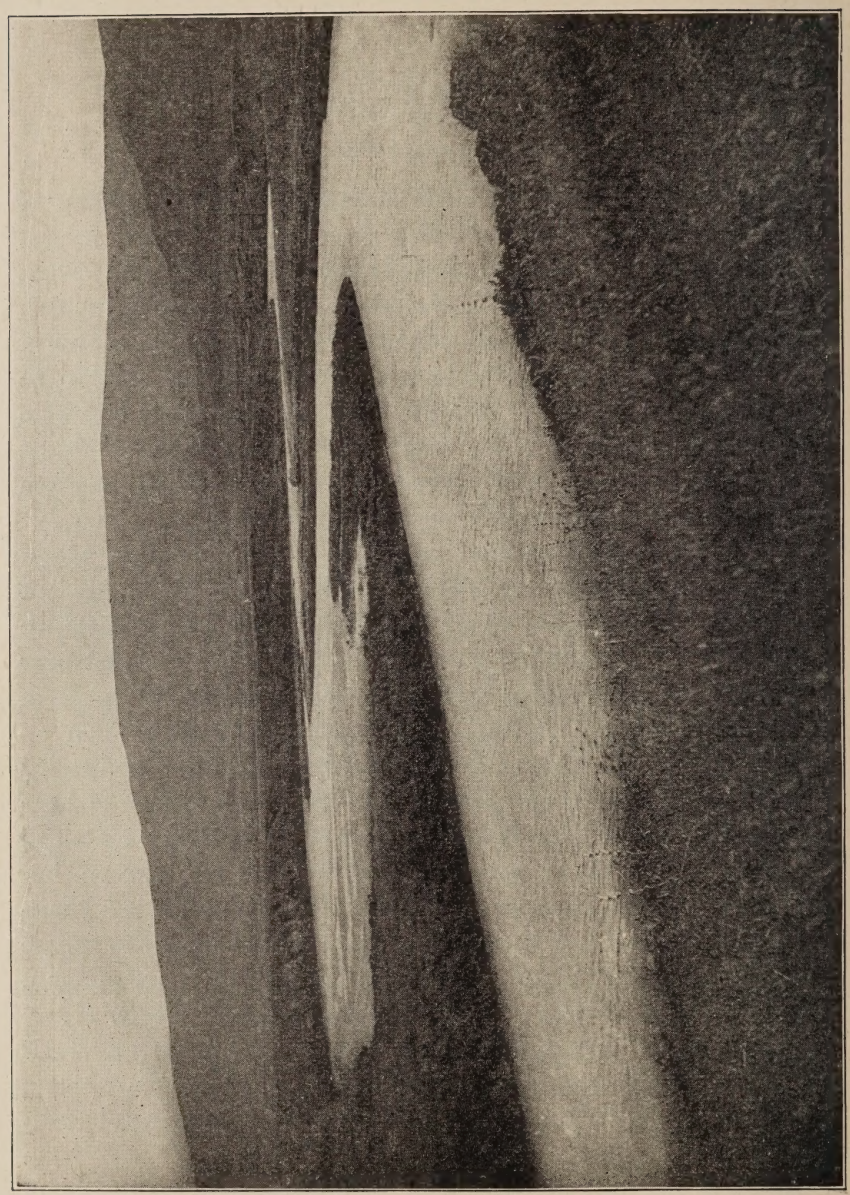
CHAPTER IV

CAPERNAUM

Capernaum, the home of Jesus during practically the whole of his Galilean public ministry (Matt. 9:1), the native place of at least three of his apostles, and the scene of many of his most important miracles and sermons, has, like the other once highly favored cities, Bethsaida and Chorazin, long since ceased to be a city or even a village. Today the Christian traveler who intelligently studies the question has usually to be content with a "perhaps," or a sincere wish that Capernaum may have been where he would like to think it stood. On few questions in Palestinian topography have English and American authorities been more evenly divided.

It is certain that Capernaum must have been an important place; in Matt. 9:1 it is called a city (πόλις); we read of a centurion resident there (Matt. 8:5), and we may conclude there was a garrison; here custom dues were collected on goods brought from the east over the Jordan or over the great highroad from Damascus and the north to Egypt (Matt. 9:9; Mark. 2:14; Luke 5:27). In position we know it was on the Lake of Galilee, not far from the region called Gennesaret (Matt. 14:34; John 6:17). It would appear to have been a very important Jewish religious center, for it not only contained a synagogue of peculiar importance, as we shall see later on, but was frequented by considerable numbers of ultra-orthodox Pharisees and scribes who set themselves actively and fanatically to oppose the new teaching of the Master (Matt. 9:3; Mark 2:6, 16, 24, etc.). It was described by Jesus as "exalted unto heaven" (Matt. 11:23; Luke 10:15). This is generally interpreted to refer to the opportunities and privileges the city enjoyed through Jesus' residence there; it is, however, possible that it may refer to some more material greatness as well.

Although the rival suggested sites for Capernaum are all within a very small geographical area, yet there is no question that the final and decisive settling of this topographical question would be a sub-



THE WINDINGS OF THE JORDAN RIVER

stantial gain because it practically would determine the positions of other surrounding cities. As in a previous chapter I have incidentally mentioned the other suggested sites[1] for Capernaum, I propose here before entering into the question of pros and cons to describe the remaining claimant, Tell Hūm. It may be as well to state that, though for convenience I am here using this form of the name which has become familiar to us through the publications of the Palestine Exploration Fund, I have great doubts as to its correctness. It is much more likely that the word should be transliterated "Telhum." The site is not a *tell* at all—although it is probable that this idea may have influenced the adoption of the present form of the name. Such a mass of ruins lying on level ground is named in Arabic a *khurbet*; a *tell* is always an elevation, often, but not necessarily, crowned with ruins. The word Telhum is probably a corruption of Tankhum, as we know from rabbinical[2] writings that a village Cepher Tankhum once stood hereabouts.

Eastward of the springs of Tabighah the hills approach the shore; and although the latter, with its little bays, presents a certain aspect of attractiveness, not so much can be said of the hills to the north with their black volcanic bowlders scattered around. It is only in the spring when the long luxuriant grass and weeds make a carpet of verdure, dotted over with myriad brilliant flowers, that this part of the coast can be called beautiful. A quiet ride or quick walk of twenty five minutes[3] brings us to the outskirts of the Tell Hūm property. Here for quite half a mile along the shore are extensive ruins of houses of many periods. Among the shapeless heaps of black stones are the miserable hovels of the Semakeyeh Arabs who make this their headquarters. A few buildings of the Arab period rise as islands amid the general desolation: the ground, under the surface, is everywhere full of old house foundations, shaped blocks of stone, and broken conduits: pottery—mixed Arab and Roman—lies scattered on every hand.

Nowhere on the whole northern shore of the lake are there ruins

[1] Khan Minia, Khurbet Minia, el ᶜOreimeh.

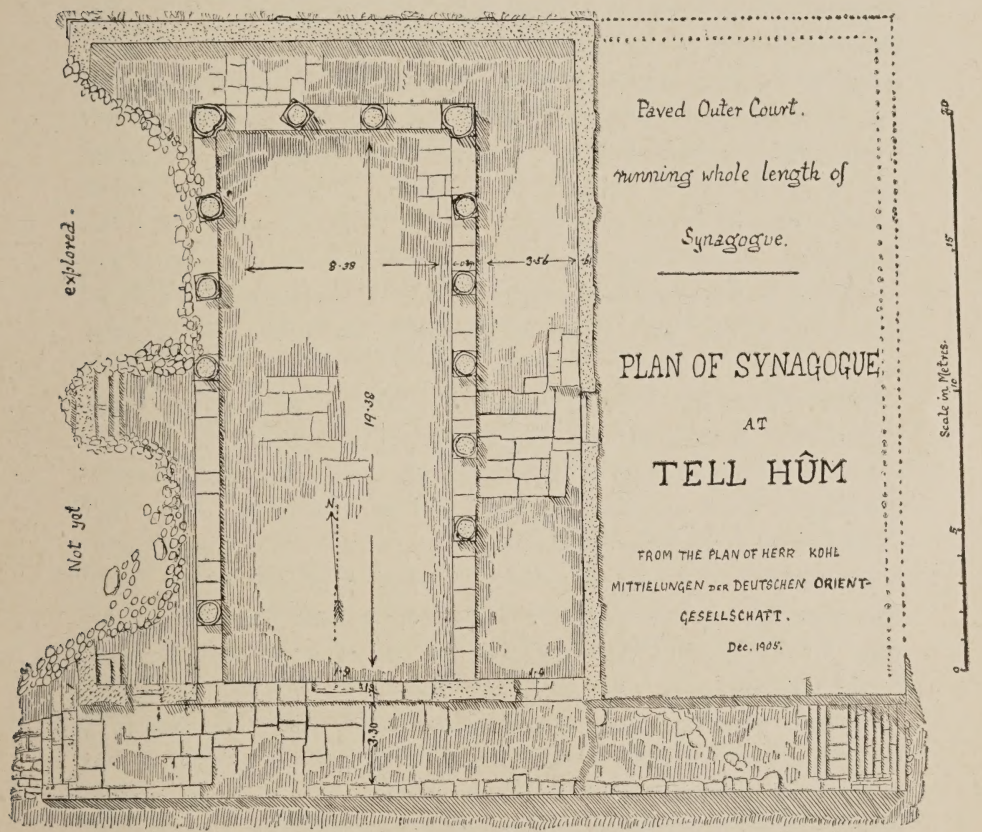
[2] Midrash, Shirhash Shirim, III, 18; Tal. Jer. Trumoth, XI, 7, etc.

[3] From the springs of Tabighah to the Tell Hūm synagogue is one and three-fourths miles in a straight line as measured on the map.

of this extent. Those unaccustomed to Palestinian ruins may belittle these remains, but compared with other sites they are very considerable. Among the heaps of black volcanic stones, once quarried from the hills around, a few scattered fragments of limestone—fragments of columns or capitals—show that some grander building once stood in this neighborhod. If we now enter the walled-in property of the Franciscan Brethren we shall see the source of these pieces. Here lie uncovered the extensive ruins of a magnificent synagogue, the existence of which has until quite recently been known only by a few fragments. During recent years a number of these Jewish synagogues have been excavated by Herr Kohl, working under the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft. At Kerāzeh, on the adjacent hills to the north, at Irbid in the Wady Hamam, at Kefr Berim, el Jish, Meron, Nebratain, and at Umm el ᶜAmed—indeed, in all places where indubitable evidence of ancient synagogues had previously been found—these buildings have been excavated, measured, and planned.

But it may be said without fear of contradiction that for size and beauty of ornament this Tell Hūm synagogue stands supreme; it would even appear to have been the model after which all the others have been built. No effort was spared to make it great and fine. For whereas with the other synagogues the stone of the locality was used (e. g., at Kerāzeh, the black volcanic rock), here at much labor and expense a beautiful white limestone (a native marble) was shipped from a distance block by block for the construction of every part, even the flooring, of the building. The carving, often in high relief, is for local work most effective. The trailing vine, the stately palm with its clusters of dates, the acanthus, the rose, and many other beautiful designs occur. Perhaps the most interesting are the seven-branched candlestick and the animal forms; among the latter are seen lions or lambs (it is not quite clear which), and birds, two eagles being especially noticeable. It must be remembered that, though all that lies on the area of the ruined synagogue has been uncovered, it is only a fraction of the ornamental work that was once here—mere specimens of the general principles of the design. Quantities of stone must have been removed, some perhaps to adorn other buildings, some to other parts of the town where they still lie beneath the ruins; but it is to be feared that the bulk has found its way into the

voracious lime kiln. This mass of limestone blocks must for centuries have been a veritable mine of treasure to the Arab builder, as there is no other such stone to be found for miles around. This is the fate which for many centuries has overwhelmed ancient inscriptions and carved stones all over the land. The Arab has not the slightest aesthetic feeling about anything of this sort.



The ground-plan of the synagogue is shown in the accompanying illustration from the sketch-plan of Herr Kohl. It faced the lake; and from its terraces, doors, and roof a most exquisite view of the whole lake and shore must have been visible. In front there was a kind of raised terrace approached from the east and west by steps. The entrance from this was by a highly ornamental triple gateway; the center portal was over six feet wide and those at the sides four and

one-half feet. There was also a lateral entrance on the east. The inside measurements are 78 feet long by 59 feet wide; there was a central court surrounded on three sides by columns with a beautiful and elaborate frieze, supporting an upper gallery. This gallery and probably the roof were sustained by wooden beams. To the east of this building a paved open courtyard of the length and nearly the breadth of the synagogue itself has been uncovered. It is now structurally part of the synagogue, as is shown both by the arrangements of the steps and terrace in front and also by the character of the pavement and surrounding wall, but it is also clearly an older construction incorporated into the present building. It is possible that it was a kind of Court of the Women. Jewesses in the Orient are not allowed in the synagogues today. They may only view the ceremonies, either from a gallery (with which a few synagogues are provided), or from just such a court as this. The open space would, of course, serve also as a place for assembly and discussion between services.

The date of this work is unknown. Most of these ruined synagogues have been tentatively assigned to the second or third century after Christ, but in none of them have any dates been found and the question is quite uncertain. I believe I am correct in saying that there is nothing in the architecture or the ornamentation which makes it *impossible* that it may have been standing in the day of our Lord. And even if the greater part of the present structure belongs to a later time, it is likely that the site and some at least of the masonry go back to the time of Jesus. For there are clear indications that an earlier building of great architectural pretensions stood here. The owners of the property are anxious to maintain that the later synagogue is that of the New Testament. This is improbable. The utter destruction whi h has overtaken these synagogues is clearly due to the repeated severe earthquakes which have visited these regions.[1]

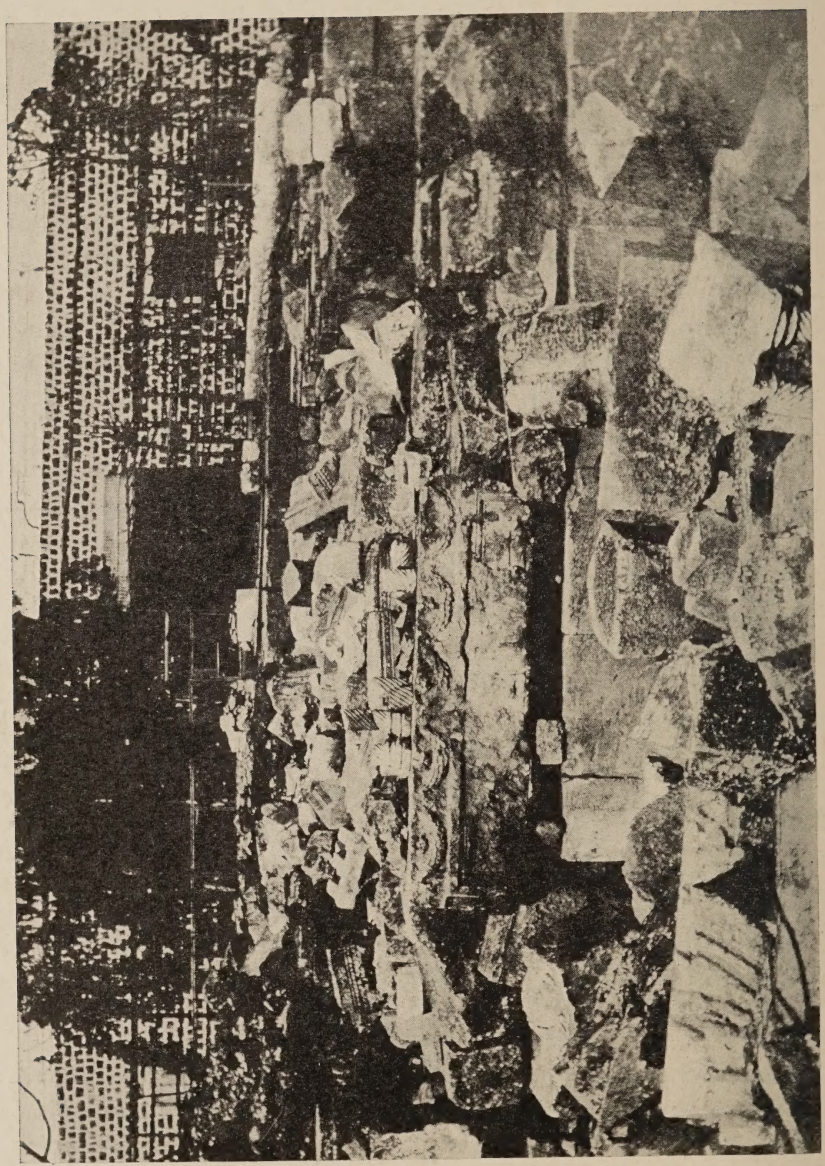
We have therefore at this site of Tell Hūm an extensive ruin—the largest on the northern shore. Besides Arab remains, we everywhere see evidences of extensive habitation in Roman times, while in the neighboring wady is a large Roman necropolis. In the midst of the town is the ruin of a marble synagogue—by far the finest of which

[1] For a fuller description and discussion, see chap. vi.

we have any urviving traces now in Galilee. Now it is a suggestive thing that most of the incidents at Capernaum are associated with a synagogue. In Luke 7:1–10, when the centurion in this city came to plead with Jesus about his sick servant, the people "besought him earnestly, saying, He is worthy that thou shouldst do this for him; for he loveth our nation, and himself built us our synagogue" (*καὶ τὴν συναγωγὴν αὐτὸς ᾠκοδόμησεν ἡμῖν*). In Mark 1:21 we read, "They went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught." Here in the same synagogue he healed the man with the unclean spirit (Mark 1:21–27; Luke 4:33–35). In this synagogue the man with the withered hand received health on the sabbath day (Matt. 12:10–13; Mark 3:1–5; Luke 6:6–11). We may notice, too, that the expression used (Mark 1:21; Luke 6:6) is *the* synagogue (*εἰς τὴν συναγωγήν*). Jairus of Capernaum was a ruler of *the* synagogue (*ἄρχων τῆς συναγωγῆς*, Luke 8:41). And it was in *the* synagogue of Capernaum that Jesus gave his discourse on the bread of life (John 6:26–59).

Although it is quite possible there may have been several synagogues in Capernaum, it is evident that there was one of pre-eminent importance and fame, and it was this that our Lord selected as the scene of his teaching in Galilee, as in Jerusalem he chose the temple (Mark 14:49; Luke 22:53). The references to this synagogue appear the more striking when we notice that, with the exception of one, or possibly two, visits to the synagogue in Nazareth (Matt. 13:54; Mark 6:2; Luke :16–30), there are no references in the ospels to any other individual synagogues. Is it not conceivable that this synagogue may have been actually the most important in all Galilee? The remains—even the earlier ones—which we find today support such a theory, but in addition we find in the gospel the incidental mention that a Roman official—a centurion—had been concerned in building it. It is improbable that this was an act of pri ate generosity; mor likely he was acting on behalf of the Tetrarch Herod Antipas, who may have wished to give the ews on the lakeside a temple worthy to rank with the fin gentile pag n buildings which studded the neighborhood of the lake—for example, at Tiberias, Hippos, Julias, and Gadara.

The existence of such a Jewish center may have actually decided



TELL HŪM

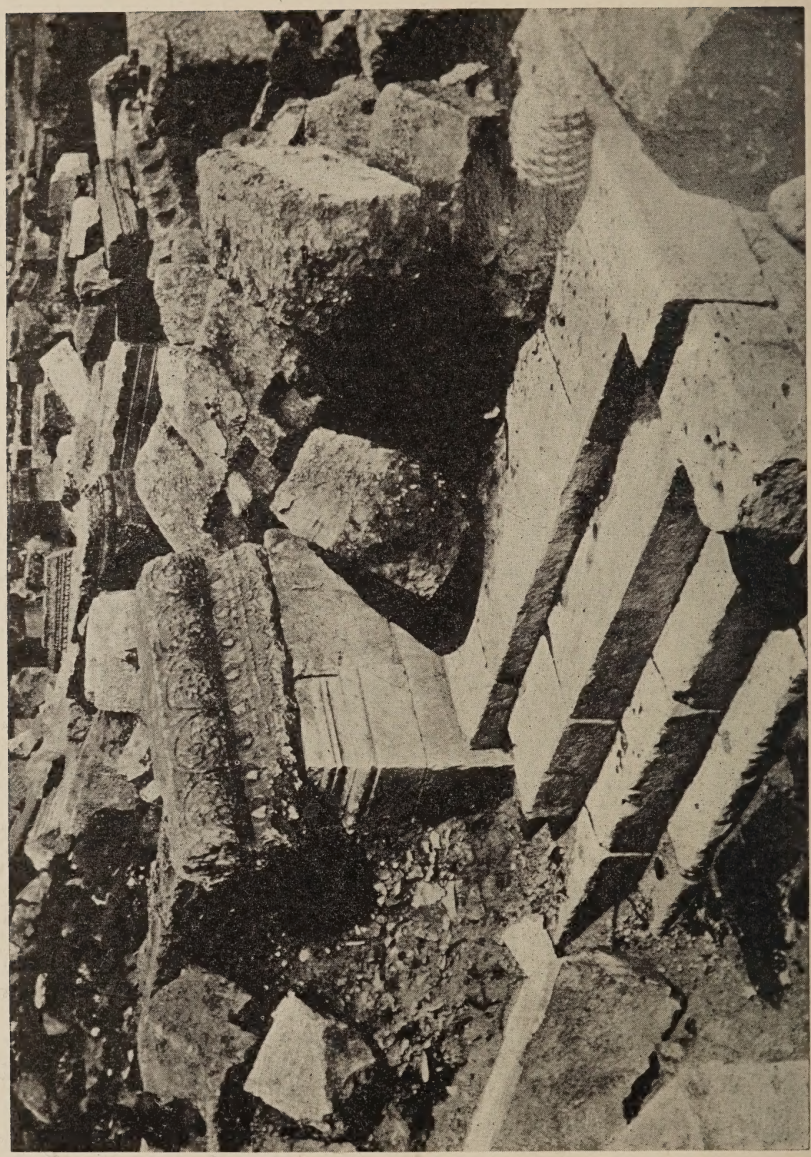
General view of the ruins now covering the area of the ancient synagogue

th: step which Jesus took when he moved from Nazareth and made Capernaum the center of his Galilean ministry. These are conjectures impossible at pre ent to prove, but the recent discoveries at Tell Hūm make it very difficult to believe that this was not the site of Capernaum. For, to take one question alone, if Tell Hūm was not the city of Capernaum, what city was it? It cannot be doubted that Tell Hūm was in Jesus' day an important city, and if we are to trust the verdict of archaeology it was by far the most important Jewish place in the district. We must always remember that in the time of Christ cities were on a ery different scale from those of later times—they were very small indeed according to our modern ideas. The ruins all over the Holy Land tell the same tale. Comparing Tell Hūm with these remains, the city once there must have been a relatively large one.

I have so f r discussed the question rather on topographical and ar haeological than on historical grounds. As the difficulties to the acceptance of the Tell Hūm site for Capernaum have been chiefly of the latter kind, I must briefly review the historical evidence.

First, we have the testimony of Josephus. Josephus (*Vita*, §72) narrates that he had been fighting near Bethsaida Julias, east of the Jordan, but had the misfortune to fall into a quagmire (in the marshy Bataihah); he was thrown to the ground, bruised his wrist, and "was carried into a village named Capharnome," whence he was next day removed by boat to Taricheae. Capharnome is without doubt the Capernaum of the gospels. Now there can be no question, whether Josephus was carried by land or sea (and the former would appear probable), that the first place of importance he would have had to pass was some town standing where the ruins of Tell Hūm now stand; and there, if anywhere on the north shore (west of the Jordan), he would have been likely to obtain a Jewish physician. The only reasonable solution is that Capharnome was at this site.

The second reference is part of the passage which was largely quoted in the previous article on Gennesaret. After his glowing description of that region, Josephus goes on: "For besides the good temperature of the air, it is also watered from a most fertile fountain. The people call it Capharnaum. Some have thought it to be a vein of the Nile because it produces the coracin fish as well as that lake



TELL HŪM

The western flight of steps leading to the terrace in front of synagogue (see plan).

does which is near Alexandria." Now with regard to this fountain, if anyone were today without bias to select one for special mention, there is one, and only one, which from its remarkable size and copiousness could for a moment be considered. This fountain is that rising in the great octagonal basin called Birket Sheikh Ali edh Dhaher, described in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Memoirs* as ʿAin Eyyub. Such a gush of water—the largest course in Galilee, might well be ascribed by the ignorant to the Nile.[1] Today travelers visiting the spot do not readily appreciate the enormous mass of water that pours forth because it rises so quietly in the old birkeh. Under more natural conditions the sight would be far more impressive. The two springs which have been suggested as alternative rivals are comparatively of such insignificance that their claims cannot seriously be maintained. No one spring can be said now to water the whole land of Gennesaret, nor ever did. But I have in the preceding chapter given reasons which seem to me convincing for believing that the corner where this spring gushes forth is topographically a part—and a very important part—of that district.

Hitherto, however, objection has been taken because the coracinus or catfish has not been found there. This objection is quite unsound, because the catfish abounds in the lake all along these shores and it finds its way up all the streams. Canon Tristram found it in the round basin of ʿAin el Madauwerah, but it is found also in ʿAin et Tineh. At ʿAin Eyyub, inasmuch as a wall twenty-six feet high was in Arab times built around the spring, it is not wonderful that this fish is no longer found there. But we have not the slightest evidence that the fountain was so surrounded in the time of Josephus, or that there was then anything to prevent this fish from finding its way to these waters. For this reason the absence there of the catfish cannot be allowed to count as important evidence.[2]

[1] Such suggestions, though so absurd to us, are still made today by the Arabs. When at ʿAin Feshkhah, by the shores of the Dead Sea, I was solemnly assured that the water of that spring came from the Virgin's Fountain in the Kedron Valley, Jerusalem —because both waters were equally brackish! See also *Q. S. of the P. E. F.*, 1909, p 206.

[2] It is an illustration of how carefully one must accept evidence that, whereas I was assured by one long resident in the district that he had *often* seen the coracin fish in this *birkeh*, on more careful cross-questioning I found that he had been quite misinformed as to the nature of the coracinus. When I told him it was the well-known catfish (Arabic, *barbût*) he at once said he had never seen it in the *birkeh*. Nor, so far as I can make out, has any other person seen it there in recent years.

It will appear to some a greater difficulty that Capernaum could give its name to a spring nearly two miles away. Now it is evident from the word itself that Capernaum was originally the name of a Capher (Arabic, *kefer*) village and not of a spring. The spring must then have been called after the town to which it belonged. There is no reason for supposing there was ever an aqueduct from this spring to Tell Hūm. But why should there have been? The lakeside people always prefer the lake water; they cannot be induced to drink anything else. But on the other hand the possession of this spring—one might say these springs, for all the Tabighah springs must have gone together—would be important for any town. With this supply gardens could be irrigated, and also manufactories, e. g., tanneries, carried on. Such a fountain would naturally be known as the Caphernaum fountain. It is perhaps worth noticing that today the property of Tell Hūm, that was brought from the Semakeyeh Arabs of Tell Hūm, comes close up to this fountain; the adjoining spring, Tannur Eyyub, is actually on the boundary line between the Tell Hūm and the Tabighah properties.

The references in Matt. 14:34; Mark 6:53; John 6:17–21, although they show that Capernaum lay near the region of Gennesaret and not far from Bethsaida, are perfectly consistent with the Tell Hūm site. Jesus and his disciples, after the incident of the walking on the water, were driven beyond their desination (John 6:17) and landed at the "land of Gennesaret"—probably at Tabighah— and made their way to their home at Capernaum on foot. The absence of a good harbor at Tell Hūm has been urged as an objection, but if the chief fishing-grounds of the city were at Tabighah—the fishing-center today—the boats may ordinarily have been kept there.

The only rival site to Tell Hūm is the ruin Khurbet Minia. I have in the previous chapter explained that this is a site which has no claim at all to antiquity. All the remains, masonry and pottery, point to an extensive occupation during the Arab period, and we know from history that in this period this site was occupied. In the eleventh century a place called Munyat Hisham was there, and in 1430 a village called el Munja, important enough to give its name to the whole lake.[1] Other people have proposed Khurbet el ᶜOreimeh

[1] G. A. Smith, art. "Capernaum," in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*.

as the site of Capernaum. But this site, as I have mentioned, was not occupied in Jesus' day, nor had it been for many centuries previous to that time. It is a very ancient site. I would suggest that it may have been the location of the "fenced city" of Naphthali, called Horem;[1] in any case it is a quite impossible site for any New Testament place.

The views of tradition regarding the site of Capernaum must be reviewed because the great Dr. Robinson makes the astonishing statement[2] that "a train of historical notices, extending down to the seventeenth century, seems to fix continuously the site of Capernaum at Khan Minyeh." Professor George Adam Smith, on the other hand, himself a supporter of the Khan Minia site, in both his *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* and in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, acknowledges that "a strong Christian tradition from the sixth century onward has fixed it (i. e., Capernaum) at Tell Hūm."[3] But he also states that both Jerome (fourth century) and Theodosius (sixth century) support this site.[4] The first authority that Robinson or G. A. Smith quotes in favor of the Khan Minia site is Arculfus, a French bishop who visited Palestine about 670 A. D. Now in the first place this good pilgrim did not himself visit Capernaum at all—he only viewed it from an unknown hill in the neighborhood. The two passages from his writings which Robinson quotes as supporting the Khan Minia site are: "Those coming from Jerusalem who desire to go to Capernaum proceed by the direct way through Tiberias; thence along the Lake of Galilee, and through the place of benediction[5] before described; from whence, along the margin of the same lake, by not a long circuit, they arrive at Capernaum upon the shore." This "place of benediction" he describes in another part as "the level

[1] The change from חרם into عربمة is not a great one.

[2] *Biblical Researches*, Vol. III, pp. 354 f.

[3] *Historical Geography*, p. 456, footnote.

[4] *Encyclopedia Biblica*, Vol. I, col. 697.

[5] There are in this neighborhood two sites now pointed out which are apparently confused (or were once blended into one): one is the scene of the Beatitudes which is traditionally (at any rate one site of it) on the hillside to the north of the great Tabighah spring. The site is now marked by a tree called Sajarat el Mubarakeh, high up on a hill on the head of the Wady et Tabighah. The other site is that of the feeding of the five thousand as described.

and grassy plot where the Savior fed the five thousand; where was also a fonticulus (small fountain); the place was on this [i. e., the west] side of the lake looking toward the city of Tiberias which was on the south."

Robinson does not venture to decide what this place was. He says: "The term fonticulus could hardly be applied in strictness either to ʿAin el Barideh or to the Round Fountain; it might seem rather to refer to some small source on the shore, not far perhaps from Mejdel." But if Robinson had inquired from those who value and preserve ecclesiastical tradition he would have learned that "the level and grassy spot" was the hill immediately to the east of the Tabighah plain and just north of the springs.[1] No more beautiful spot for the scene of this event—or for any other great open-air gathering—could be found. The fountain is undoubtedly that rising in the Birket Sheikh Ali edh Dhaher, as a whole succession of pilgrims associate the multiplication of the five loaves and the two fishes with the seven springs or Heptapegon, from which latter word the name Tabighah is derived.[2] The derivation does not on paper have the same manifest reasonableness as it has when one hears the latter word pronounced by the Bedawin of the desert; the similarity is then immediately apparent.

Now, this site being fixed, the statement of Bishop Arculfus is surely correct when he says that from there "along the margin of the lake, *by not a long circuit*, they arrive at Capernaum upon the shore." He then describes Capernaum as he saw it from a neighboring hill:

[1] In the *Palestine Exploration Fund Memoirs* the hill el ʿOreimeh, to the west of the plain of Tabighah, is suggested as the traditional site referred to; it is also stated that this was probably the spot known as Mensa Christi. Without entering into a full discussion of these ecclesiastical traditions, which would be foreign to the present purpose, I may say that all the evidence and the present local tradition seem to be in favor of the hill to the east of the plain. The Mensa appears at one time to have been a flat stone near the lake at which Jesus provided the meal after the resurrection. It is mentioned by several early pilgrims. Later on the stone disappeared or was lost sight of; and the plain itself, supposed then to be the site of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, was called the Mensa. (See statement of the Franciscan Noë farther on; also a somewhat fuller discussion of the traditions, and a paper on "The Site of Capernaum" by the present writer in the *Quarterly Statement* of the Palestine Exploration Fund for July, 1907).

[2] For an able review of all the traditions connected with Tabighah see M. Heidet, *Das heilige Land* (1896), pp. 347–58, chapter on "Tabighah und seine Erinnerungen."

"It had no wall; and being confined to a narrow space between the mountain and lake, it extended a long way upon the shore from west to east, having the mountain on the north and the lake on the south." I must confess I cannot see one point in this description which fits the Khurbet Minia, while as a description of the Tell Hūm site, especially as that of one viewing it from the distance, it is quite accurate. Khurbet Minia is out in the plain el Ghuweir, is in no way shut in between the mountain and the lake, and does not and can never have extended along the shore. Arculfus evidently wishes to explain the curiously long and narrow shape of Tell Hūm, and states that this is due to the narrowness of the level surface near the shore. This is evident to anyone visiting the place. Immediately to the north of the ruins the hills slope upward and there is no evidence that the city ever extended on to those hills.

The second pilgrim quoted by Robinson in favor of his contention is Willibald, who visited the Holy Land about 723. Robinson says: "From Tiberias he proceeded along the lake by Magdala to Capernaum, where was a house and a great wall. Thence he went on to Bethsaida, where was a church; and remaining one night, he came in the morning to Chorazin." This itinerary has more bearing on the sites of Bethsaida and Chorazin than of Capernaum. But as now Bethsaida is generally reckoned to have been at el Tell or some other site on el Bataihah, and Chorazin was at Kerāzeh, it seems evident that this pilgrim went from Tiberias to Magdala, then across el Ghuweir, past Tabighah to Tell Hūm, thence across the Jordan (by ferry or ford) to Bethsaida, where he stayed the night, and then again across the Jordan at the ford and up the hills to Chorazin. The evidence of Willibald has no bearing whatever on the Khan Minia site.

Next we have Eugesippus (Hegesippus) about 1170. He says that "the descent of that mountain, where our Lord preached to the multitude, was two miles from Capernaum; one mile from there is the place where Jesus fed the five thousand, therefore this place is named the table (*mensa*). Below this place is the spot where Jesus ate with his disciples after his resurrection." This would appear clear and definite enough, but here Dr. Robinson, in order to maintain the Khan Minia site, says the mountain here referred to was the "Horns of Hattin." Were this the case, the description would be

singularly inexact, as from these to Khan Minia, as measured on the map on a straight line, is eight miles! The mountain here referred to is clearly part of the Tabighah district and perhaps the hill where today stands the Sajaret el Mubarakeh which is supposed to mark the "mount of benediction."

The next pilgrim quoted by Robinson is the German Dominican monk Burkhard or Brocardus about 1283. His testimony is so important, and, when quoted fully, so contrary to the conclusion of Robinson, that I quote a translation of it at some length. After descending the "Mount of the Beatitudes," before described as lying to the east of the plain of Tabighah, he goes on:

> At the foot of the mountain, about thirty paces from the sea, arises a fountain of living water, which is surrounded by a wall and which is supposed to be a vein of the Nile because in it is found the Coracinus fish which is found nowhere else. Josephus calls this fountain Caphernaum because the whole land from the fountain to the Jordan—a distance of two hours—belonged to Capernaum. Twenty paces from the fountain toward the lake of Gennesaret is the place where Jesus stood on the shore, after his resurrection, when he appeared to his seven disciples who fished there and said to them, "Children, have you nothing to eat?" There have I seen impressed on a stone three footsteps of our Lord. It was the feast day of St. Augustine, but when I arrived again on the feast of the Annunciation the Saracens had removed the stone from its place. Ten paces from this is the place where the disciples who came from the sea found the coals, and the fish on them and the bread. This place is called by the Christians *tabula* or *mensa*. From this place, at a distance of one hour, is Capernaum, and two hours from the same place is the Jordan.

Here the description entirely agrees with that of numerous other pilgrims who one after another describe the wonderful sites of Heptapegon, i. e., Tabighah, and put Capernaum as one hour—or sometimes two miles—and the Jordan as two hours, to the east. I have purposely quoted and referred only to those pilgrims whose accounts have been quoted by Robinson as supporting the Khan Minia site for Capernaum.

Among later pilgrims I need only quote the account of the Franciscan monk Noë who, in the account of his travels (1508), thus refers to "the place where our Lord fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes." He says:

> Now if you leave Capernaum and go about two miles thence you will find a mountain where our Lord preached and healed a leper; at the foot of this mountain is a place where our Lord fed five thousand persons, without counting women

and children, with five loaves and two fishes, as the gospel tells us. This plain is a beautiful country and is called the table of honor, *Mensa d'onore*,[1] because of the wonders which our Lord did there.

It would appear that after this time insuperable difficulties[2] stood in the way of pilgrims reaching this place. And, as has happened in other parts of the land, when it became impossible to lead the devout to the real (or supposed real) site, more accessible places were selected as substitutes. Thus the tradition of the "Mount of the Beatitudes" was transferred to the Horns of Hattin, and the site of the feeding of the five thousand to a neighboring hill between this last and Tiberias. Probably in the earlier times the pilgrims were conducted to these spots, and from there the sites to the north of the lake were pointed out; but gradually the places from which these sites were viewed from afar came to be looked upon by the pilgrims as the actual sites. The site of the appearance of Christ after his resurrection, which through many centuries had been pointed out at Tabighah, now became changed to Tiberias. All these sites being thus altered, and the memory of the traditional sites being lost, it is no wonderful thing that the site of Capernaum was also changed. Thus it came about that in 1620 we *for the first time* read of the suggestion of Quaresmius that Capernaum was not at Tell Hūm but at Minia. Thus he says: "On the site of Capernaum are many ruins and a miserable diversorium (*khan*) called in Arabic Minich, six miles distant from the place where the Jordan flows into the lake." It is evident that the Arabic town Munja having fallen into ruins, a supposition arose that this was the site of Capernaum.

It has been maintained, but without any actual evidence, that Minia is a word derived from *Minim*, a word used in rabbinical writings for heretics, the context showing that Christians are meant. There were many *Minim* at Kapher Nakhum. In the Midrash Rabbah on Ecclesiastes 1:8, among the things "full of labor," after mentioning with examples idleness and trade, it next states that heresy

[1] It has been suggested to me that this *onore* may be really a corruption of the Arab word, *ᶜoreimeh*.

[2] These difficulties, due probably to the insecurity of the roads and the hostility of the Moslems, commenced in the middle of the fourteenth century and extended from that time forward for some centuries. The testimony of Noë quoted above comes after a long silence, and is the last till modern times in favor of the old traditions.

(*menoth*) is "full of labor" and illustrates with the following tale: A certain Rabbi Khannina came to Kapher Nakhum, where he was bewitched by the *Minim* so that he broke the Sabbath by riding on a donkey. He then returned to his uncle, Rabbi Joshua, who gave him a kind of ointment by which the spell was removed. The uncle would not, however, trust his nephew for the future, but said to him: "Since the braying of that wicked donkey is in you, you cannot stay in the land of Israel." So he sent him away to Babylon, where he eventually died. This story is again referred to in the Midrash on Ecclesiastes 7:26, where, after several other similar illustrations of the hidden meaning of the verse, it explains that the man "good before God" was Khannina, the nephew of Rabbi Joshua, and the sinners the "children of Kapher Nakhum." The date of these references is uncertain; they probably refer to some event which happened in the very early days of Christianity.

By Jewish tradition the name Kapher Nakhum is derived from the prophet Nakhum (Nahum), who was buried there. Schwarz states that Kepher Tankhum is also called in the Jerusalem Talmud Kaphir Takhumin, i. e., the town of the boundaries, and he says that here was the boundary between Zebulon and Naphthali, as is stated in Matt. 4:13. He also quotes Rabbi Isaac Farhi, who visited the Holy Land in 1322, as stating in the "Kaftor Raphireh" that "Kaphir Tankhum or Nakhum is to the east of Gennesaret about half an hour." In 1334 Isaac Chilo came to Kaphir Nakhum from Irbid[1] and found it in ruins; but the tomb of Nakhum was still shown, and in 1561 we have mention of Tankhum with the tombs of Nahum and Rabbi Tankhum. It must be remembered that during the very period covered by these visits there was an Arab settlement on the site of Khurbet Minia, as has been mentioned before. Schwarz says of his own time (1852): "This place (Tell Hūm) is now a ruin known to all the Jews; they call it Kaphir Tankhum." He adds that there are three tombs: that of the Prophet Nakhum, and of the Rabbis Tankhuma and Tankhum.

[1] Conder (*Bible Handbook*) argues that as the Rabbi was going to Kefr Anan and took Kephir Nakhum on his way, the latter place must have been at Khan Minia, inasmuch as Tell Hūm was too much out of his way. Anyone referring to the map (e.g., accompanying the chapter (iii) on "Gennesaret") will see that *both* places are completely out of the direct route and argument against one condemns both!

That Tell Hūm really is the site of Capernaum is thus shown from five sources: (1) The ruins, especially those of the unique marble synagogue, witness to how important a city once stood here. The prominence of the synagogue among the ruins is in striking agreement with the frequent mention of the synagogue in the gospels. (2) This site agrees entirely with the Bible references, especially if it be allowed (as I trust I have demonstrated) that Gennesaret was an area considerably larger than the level plain (el Ghuweir). (3) The references in Josephus also harmonize with the identification of this site as Capernaum; the fountain "Caphernaum" must without doubt be the great spring at Tabighah. (4) I have, I hope, made it clear that so far from "a train of historical notices, extending down to the seventeenth century, fixing the site of Capernaum at Khan Minia," the very reverse is the case; and that until the isolated statement of Quaresmius, in the seventeenth century, every statement by the Christian pilgrims is consistent with the Tell Hūm site. The key to the understanding of the accounts is the recognition of the various traditions connected with the seven springs—the Heptapegon—of Tabighah. (5) In the Jewish references we find Kaphir Nakhum (the traditional tomb of the prophet Nahum) identified with Kaphir Tankhum, which latter word has, by a common linguistic corruption, been altered to Telhum or, to use the form common to Westerners, Tell Hūm.

CHORAZIN AND BETHSAIDA

CHAPTER V

CHORAZIN AND BETHSAIDA

Of Chorazin it may be said truly we know no more than can be gathered from the scanty references in Matt. 11:21 and Luke 10:13. It was one of the spots near the Lake of Galilee favored by the teaching of Jesus; it was not far from the associated cities of Capernaum and Bethsaida, and it may be seen that like them it was an important Jewish center in those days. The early Christian writers, Eusebius and Jerome, describe Chorazin as two Roman miles from Capernaum, but the latter introduces an element of difficulty in stating[1] that it was upon the shore of the lake. This cannot however be intended as a strictly geographical description, for he says the same of Bethsaida which, if at et Tell, was at least as far from the lake itself as Chorazin. There is no possible ruin by the lake side which can be identified as that of Chorazin, while at Khurbet Kerāzeh, in an extensive ruin including the remains of a large synagogue, some two miles north of Tell Hūm, we have manifestly the Arabic equivalent of the ancient name.

With regard to Bethsaida we have much more definite information. In addition to a number of references in the gospels, there is a good deal to be gathered from secular historians. Thus Josephus states:[2]

> He [Philip] also advanced the Village (κώμη) of Bethsaida to the dignity of a city, both by the number of inhabitants it contained and also its other grandeur, and called it by the name of Julias, the same name as Caesar's daughter.

In another passage[3] we read that—

> Caesar (Nero) bestowed on Agrippa a certain part of Galilee, Tiberias and Taricheae, and ordered them to submit to his jurisdiction. He also gave him Julias, a city of Perea, with fourteen villages that lay about it.

It is expressly stated in other passages that it lay in lower Gaulanitis[4] and close to the Jordan.[5] Philip, when he died there, was buried with

[1] ". . . . lacus Gennesareth, in cujus litore Capernaum et Tiberias et Bethsaida et Chorazaim sitae sunt."—Jerome, *Jes.*, 9. 1.

[2] *Ant.*, XVIII, xi, 1.

[3] *Ant.*, XX, viii, 4.

[4] *B. J.*, II, ix, 1.

[5] *B. J.*, III, x, 7; *Vita*, § 72.

great pomp and "was carried to that monument which he had already erected for himself beforehand."[1] Pliny and Jerome both mention that Bethsaida was east of the Jordan.

The city thus referred to is without doubt that mentioned in Luke 9:10. As several villages appear from the above extract to have been associated with Julias, it is quite likely that the "desert place," the scene of the feeding of the five thousand, may have been a distant corner of its extensive domains lying, as has been often suggested, some distance down the east coast; in this well-watered district near the time of the Passover "green grass" would be present in abundance (cf. John 6:4, 10; Luke 6:34). This region being under the jurisdiction of Herod Philip, not Herod Antipas, explains (Matt. 14:13) our Lord's returning after the death of John the Baptist at the hands of the latter.

A Bethsaida situated east of the Jordan also suits well the conditions of Mark 8:22, for our Lord immediately after the healing of the blind man in that city comes to the villages of Caesarea Philippi which must have been, mainly at any rate, on the east side of the Jordan.

The passage which seems to imply the existence of a second Bethsaida is Mark 6:45, but as has repeatedly been shown, this is not necessarily the case. It must be remembered, first, that the site of the feeding of the five thousand may have been some little distance down the east shore, and, secondly, that to cross to "over against Bethsaida" was most quickly done by boat because of the many inlets which interrupt the shoreway along the plain, el-Bataihah. To cross a considerable bay and the mouth of a channel like the Zakeyeh—considerably wider than the mouth of the Jordan itself—might be described as going to "the other side." Besides, a similar expression is used by Josephus of crossing from Tiberias to Taricheae—both on the west side of the lake. They were to wait "over against Bethsaida," that is, I take it, close to the mouth of the Jordan, but on the eastern side, ready to escort across the river their Master who was intending to join them by the land route through Bethsaida. They expected to be there first and to wait on the shore till he came, but the storm set in and made a landing at the Jordan mouth, and even at Capernaum, their headquarters, impossible.

[1] *Ant.*, XVIII, iv, 6.

With regard to the expression, Bethsaida of Galilee,[1] used in John's Gospel, it has been clearly shown[2] that the term may perfectly well have been applied to the city Julias. In a previous quotation from Josephus[3] we notice that Julias was, along with a certain part of Galilee, Tiberias and Taricheae, given by Nero to Agrippa II; it thus came under one administration. In 84 A. D., the east coast of the lake was definitely included in the province of Galilee and not many years later[4] (140 A. D.) we have the definite statement that Julias was in Galilee. If we summarize the facts we find: (1) The gospels make no clear reference to any second Bethsaida. (2) The probability that there were two towns or villages of the same name within such a short distance is very slight. It must be remembered that Julias is not a qualifying epithet but a *new name*. Only confusion is made by using the name Bethsaida-Julias, as if the names were used together. Probably the vast majority of the inhabitants clung to the Semitic name Bethsaida, leaving the new foreign name for use by the officials only. The survival of Banias (=Panias), while the name Caesarea-Philippi is quite forgotten, is an example and a result of this custom. (3) There is no reference to, or any suggestion of, a second Bethsaida in any of the early Christian writers or pilgrimage records. (4) Archaeologically there is no site on the western shore which shows any remains of such a second Bethsaida. If there was such a place it must have been a mere fishing suburb of Capernaum, at, say, Tabighah.

With regard to the situation of Julias there is a considerable unanimity of opinion; there is indeed only one possible site for such a city, namely, et Tell, at the northwestern corner of the delta-plain, el Bataihah. It is true that Dr. Schumacher is often quoted as supporting the claims of the squalid ruin el Mesʿadīyeh on the shore of this plain, but as he makes an equal claim of another shore-ruin, el ʿAraj, this opinion cannot be worth much in his own eyes. The fact is, neither the situation[5]—it is far from the Jordan, nor the suitability of its site

[1] John 1:44; 12:21.

[2] See G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land;* and Buhl, *Geographie des alten Palästina*, p. 242.

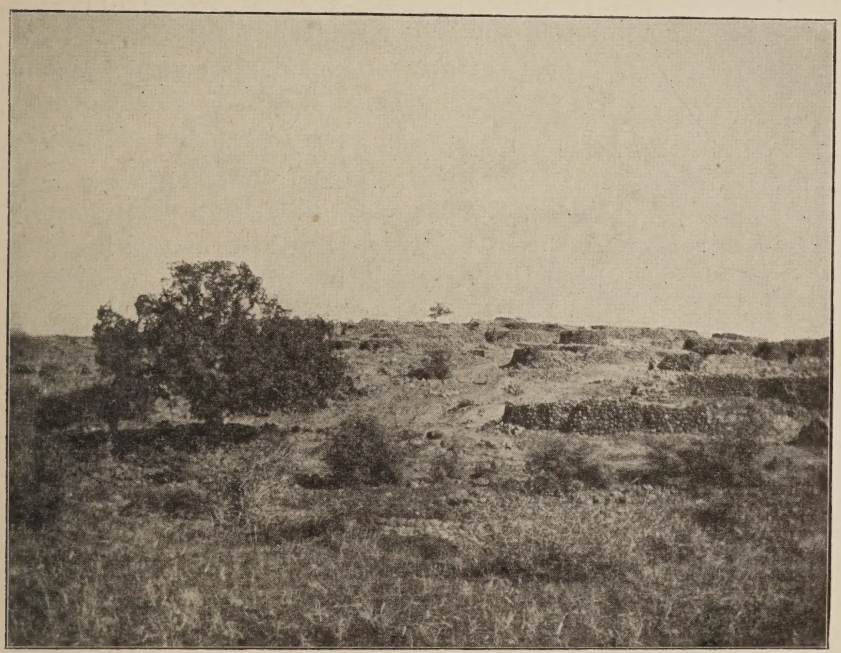
[3] *Ant.*, XX, viii, 4. [4] Pliny, v. 1.

[5] "The ruins are unimportant, although extensive; the building stones are mostly unhewn. The place is surrounded by marshes and consequently unhealthy."—C. Schumacher, *The Jaulan*, p. 221.

A VIEW OF TABIGHAH AND THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT

The buildings are those of the German Hospice.

to be that of an attractive and semi-royal city, nor its archaeological remains—which are *nil*, give it any claim whatever to represent the site of a city so important as Julias. The more we see of the sites of the old cities of Palestine the more sure we may be of the likeliness of one site and the impossibility of another; el Mesʿadīyeh is an impossible site for a Judaeo-Roman city. It may well be the site of one of those villages which were bestowed with the city upon Philip.



RUIN HEAPS OF BETHSAIDA

In giving a description, as I here propose to do, of the two sites, Kerāzeh and et Tell, I think the most satisfactory way will be to describe a visit to these places. They are both so seldom visited by even student-tourists that some account of how easily they may be reached may encourage Bible students to pay them more attention. It is quite astonishing how few who mention these sites in guide-books and accounts of the country have ever been there themselves.

The route followed was from Safed to Kerāzeh (3 hours), Kerāzeh to Tell Hūm (1¼ hours), Tell Hūm to the Jordan (1 hour), Jordan mouth,

via el Araj, to et Tell (1 hour), et Tell via ed Dikkeh to higher fords of Jordan (1 hour), Jordan to Safed (4 hours)—in all ten hours, actual traveling which might be shortened a little by omitting ed Dikkeh and crossing the Jordan at the regular ford, in which case a more frequented and shorter way to Safed can be taken. Although the whole round can easily be done by a good rider on a long summer's day, yet I am, in my account, combining two separate excursions, one made in January, 1907, from Safed to Tell Hūm via Kerāzeh, and one made in June, 1907, from Tell Hūm via et Tell to Safed.

Safed is a very favorable center for exploring the greater part of Galilee. Its position is central. Thus Tiberias is but five hours, Banias but seven hours, Akka but nine hours away. Either Hūleh or the Lake of Galilee can be reached within three hours' easy ride. For exploration in the neighborhood of the north shore of the lake, by far the most interesting point, it is very convenient. Especially is this the case with those wishing to make their investigations in the summer months when it is incumbent on the tourist to have a cool resort as his headquarters. Safed, 2,750 feet above the Mediterranean and about 3,400 feet above the lake, enjoys in the summer a climate almost as salubrious as the higher parts of the Lebanon.

The route from Safed to Kerāzeh for the first hour and a half is the same as that to Tabighah and Tell Hūm. The roads diverge at the ruined *khan* Jubb Yusuf—one of the mediaeval Arab *khans* erected on the great Damascus Road. The Jubb Yusuf, or Pit of Joseph, which gives its name to the *khan*, is a shallow pit on a low hillside, just behind the *khan*, which by a quite worthless Moslem tradition is claimed to be the one into which Joseph was thrust by his brethren (Gen. 37:24). From this *khan* roads diverge in many directions: that to Kerāzeh is to the north side of the hill behind the *khan*. A few hundred yards along this track we came upon a large encampment of Zinghariyeh Bedawin, and soon after we found ourselves descending an extraordinarily rough track amid confused bowlders of black basaltic rock. Indescribably bad as the road was, there was no question but that we were traveling at times on, at other times beside, an ancient highway which can be traced all the way to Kerāzeh. The descent that we took—there may possibly be a better one—for the last quarter of a mile into the Wady Kerāzeh was a sheer scramble down which few

but Syrian horses could have followed us. The valley bottom, down which trickled a sluggish stream, the result of recent showers, was full of great black bowlders and rank marsh shrubs. Above us, to the southeast, we could see some confused heaps and walls, a part of the ruins of Kerāzeh. At first we wandered a little down the valley, as we had wrongfully gathered from the description in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Memoirs*[1] that some of the ruins were there. Finding nothing but rugged natural rocks, we scaled the cliffs some eighty feet, where the valley makes a sharp turn round a rocky spur. At length, on reaching the top of this, we found ourselves on the highest point of the ruins. Near us were several houses which the Bedawin, who make this their headquarters, have rebuilt and roofed in; among the stones are many which are well cut, and squared. A little below us to the east, in practically the center of the remains, was the ruined synagogue. To the southeast the ground slopes downward in a small shallow valley running southwest toward the Wady Kerāzeh; there the ground was thick with ruined houses, the majority of the stones being natural rounded masses, but a considerable proportion long, well-cut pieces for doors and windows. It must not be forgotten in visiting such a site as this that the larger proportion of stones for ordinary house walls were used in their natural condition or roughly broken. Only the very best buildings were made of cut stone throughout. The ruins also cover a large area of sloping land to the northeast. Counting only what lies on the surface, the ruins cover some acres and are, as far as I can judge, more extensive than those of Tell Hūm. We found the traces of three oil presses which show that the neighborhood must once have had plenty of olive trees. There is a Moslem wely to the northeast with, as usual, a few *sidr* trees around. The synagague is the only surviving building of importance. Herr Kohl laid bare the ground plan of the building and many of the larger stones, but the site as a whole would be well worth an exhaustive examination. There was the usual triple gateway, and the dimensions appear to have been similar to those at Tell Hūm.[2] Very much still

[1] Vol. I, p. 402.

[2] "It appears to have resembled the synagogue at Tell Hūm more closely than the others. The interior length is 74 ft. 6 in., with a breadth of 49 ft."—*Palestine Exploration Fund Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 401.

lies under the surface, but the many scattered fragments of elaborately carved stone on the surface, and built with the walls of neighboring houses, show that the synagogue was one over which much labor had been expended. The result, however, could never have been so fine as at Tell Hūm because only the black volcanic rock of the district was employed. From the doors of the synagogue a fine view of the Lake of Galilee is visible toward the south. This, however, is the only touch of beauty. Today the neighborhood is dreary in the extreme. The Wady Kerāzeh, which makes a bend round the spur on which the city stood, presents today an unbroken surface of dull, black rocks unrelieved by a single green tree; the whole surface of the ground around is of the same dreary color. Looking about, I tried in imagination to see the hill slopes covered with terrace above terrace of clustering vines and the level slopes to the east green with olive groves; but the depressing reality so obtruded itself that I cannot recall the site of Chorazin as anything but cheerless and forbidding.

The learned Dr. Robinson condemned this site topographically without having visited it. He writes:[1]

> The ruins consist simply of a few foundations of black stones, the remains evidently of a poor and inconsiderable village. They are known as Khurbet Kerāzeh. We did not go to them as there was no path and because they were in full view. . . . . The remains are too trivial to have ever belonged to a place of importance. . . . . The site is . . . . shut in among the hills, without any view of the lake and remote from any public road whether ancient or modern.

This very unusual neglectfulness on the part of Dr. Robinson has caused a regular tangle of difficulties in New Testament topography. Had he visted this site he would have seen ruins even more extensive than Tell Hūm[2] and the remains of a synagogue second only in importance to that of the latter place; he would have noticed the one real attraction of the site, the magnificent view of the lake, and he could not have failed to trace the well-marked remains of the ancient, probably Roman, road. He would not, had he seen the ruins, have located Chorazin at Tell Hûm and made other theories in topography which have been so much quoted and relied on by subsequent writers. Sir Charles Wilson who visited the site at a later date gives a very different

[1] *Biblical Researches*, Vol. III, p. 347.

[2] This is the opinion which Herr Kohl expressed to me verbally.

account.[1] He has no doubt about this being the site of Chorazin. We may today, I think, accept this site as one of the certainties of biblical topography.

From Khurbet Kerāzeh to Tell Hūm it is possible to follow the old (Roman) road which ran down the shallow valley, in which lay the southern parts of the town, and enter the Wady Kerāzeh. Near the mouth of the latter is to be found the Roman necropolis of Capernaum. Instead of taking this route we descended by a path down the steep, rocky hillside, reaching our goal in a little over an hour.

Tell Hūm to et Tell.—We left the Franciscan hospice at Tell Hūm at 11:30 and, after riding for ten minutes through ruined foundations, we crossed the Wady Kerāzeh (here called Wady el Weibdah)—a rather picturesque torrent bed with rocky banks. In a quarter of an hour we reached the fertile little Wady en Nāshef, its center full of oleanders overhanging a number of small water channels. To the south there is a pretty bay where many cattle were standing knee deep in the water. Ten minutes farther on we crossed the Wady Zukluk, on the lake shore of which is a *ḥāsel* (a storehouse for grain, etc.) belonging to the Shemālneh Bedawin. We here turned to the beach, passing the wely of Sultan Ibrahim, a tomb under two large *sidr* (acacia) trees. The sand lying along the shore is here a dirty grayish black, being the product of the decomposition of basaltic rocks. On reaching the Jordan mouth a friendly Bedawy, with his *kamîs* held well above his waist, escorted us over the ford which here lies along the bar and makes considerable circuit into the lake. The depth was sufficient just to submerge our stirrups. A considerable herd of young buffaloes lying in the water near our landing-place—looking from the distance like a crop of black rocks—all rose simultaneously as we passed them, to stare at the strange sight of *frangees* invading their domains. At the spot where we reached the shore the beach consists of a solid mass of white shells with which I, in a few minutes, filled one of my saddle-bags. Just inland of the beach a considerable stretch of irrigated plain has recently been planted with orange and lemon trees. The young trees look flourishing. We skirted the shore to the spot el Araj, where there is an old *ḥāsel*, two modern cottages, and some palms. This is suggested by Schumacher as the site of the "fishing suburb" of Beth-

[1] *Recovery of Jerusalem*, pp. 346, 347.

saida,[1] and though I had been there before I specially visited it to see what evidences were to be found to support such a view. I must confess there seemed to me to be little in favor of such a theory. Neither walls nor hewn stones in any numbers are visible. In this marshy delta marked changes must have taken place in the last 2,000 years, and probably the conformation of the low beach here was in New Testament times quite different from that which holds at present. We found neither Roman remains nor any sign of a Roman road, but even had there been it is difficult to see what bearing they could have on the site of the city of Bethsaida. The fishermen, then as now, probably occupied temporary huts on the shore when engaged in loading or unloading their boats. At the back of el Araj is a stretch of marshy lagoon, which is crossed by a causeway of stones, partially submerged in the middle: it is a narrow path like a water channel, and admits of pedestrian traffic only; with our horses we had to skirt the marsh for about ten minutes in a westerly direction till we rounded its western end. Thence we turned straight toward et Tell which we could see about a mile off. Our path ran for most of the way alongside a shallow irrigation canal, one of many with which this plain is intersected. Probably the constant alluvial deposits have buried all traces of the made roads which must have once run here. Harvesting was going on in places—it was June—and trains of camels loaded high with masses of corn swept over the plain in various directions; much of the rich land, however, was given over to weeds. In just an hour from el Araj, by our very winding path, we reached the foot of et Tell. Running past the southern extremity of the hill is a well-trodden highroad, evidently an ancient route, parallel to which runs an irrigation canal from the Jordan. At the point at which we reached et Tell, the southeast corner, is a *wely* shaded by a terebinth and several *sidr* trees.

The *tell* is a fairly lofty hill, its highest point being some 50 or 60 feet above the surrounding plain. It is connected by a narrow lower neck with the hills behind it to the north, but the other sides rise steeply from the level ground. Its area is considerable, quite enough to have sustained a city of fair size—in Roman times. From end to end it is strewn with ruins and although we could find no carved frag-

[1] *The Jaulan*, p. 94.

ments, there is a large quantity of well-cut-squared basaltic blocks. The south and southwestern slopes are covered with cattle-sheds—four-walled structures with roofs supported by double arches. These are all built of basaltic blocks, many well squared, and over the doors are lintels of long and well-cut stones. Besides several dozen cattle-sheds still in repair there are at least as many in ruins. No one now dwells permanently on the *tell* which, in addition to its use as a winter refuge for the cattle of the Tellawîyeh Arabs, is the cemetery of this tribe of mongrel Bedawin. Their graves are scattered all over the hill both on the summit and around its sides. It is the headquarters of this tribe, whose name is derived from et Tell.

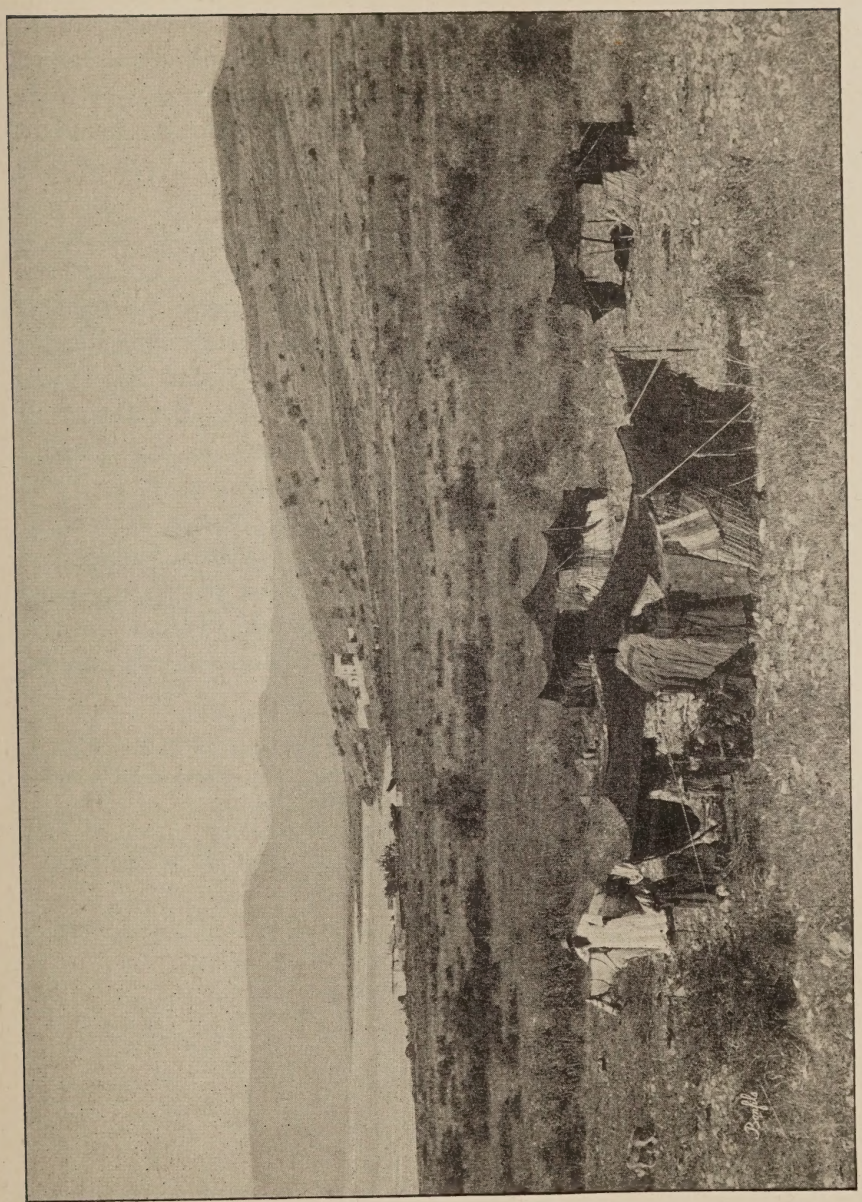
Thick clumps of tall thistles rendered our examination of the site difficult, but where vegetation had been trodden down the pottery fragments—Arab, so far as I could judge—were lying thick. There can be no question but that this is an ancient site of importance which would well repay excavation; it is to be feared, however, that the numerous graves scattered over the best parts would be an insuperable obstacle. From many points of view the site is a suitable one for a city. It is one of the common type of ancient fortified posts—a hill isolated by nature on almost every side; such a site as this was probably a fortified town in pre-Roman times. Secondly, the site is a healthy one as compared with the intensely malarious plain.[1] Immediately we mounted the hill a refreshing breeze, not felt before, met us. The dwellers in the Bataihah marshes suffer from a most virulent form of malaria; no fixed population could flourish in this region. On the hill slopes, above the irrigated and marshy land, within reach of fresher air, life might well be far more salubrious. Thirdly, the site is one of great natural beauty. The view of the lake is one of the most charming I have seen; although we are looking at the lake from the northeast corner one receives the impression of being in the middle of the north shore—the whole of the sweep to the northwest around Gennesaret is hidden. The plain, shut in by an amphitheater of hills, even today is attractive, but when fully cultivated must have presented a sea of verdure. To the southwest the serpentine Jordan

[1] The whole Jordan Valley is unhealthy, but in the northern part the two worst spots are the shores of the Huleh and the plain el Bataihah. Here a large proportion of the inhabitants have enormous spleens and even "black-water fever" occurs.

winds its way through a wide plain[1] of green foliage, while almost due west—between et Tell and the Jordan—is a mass of trees and shrubs. The low hills to the north, now so bare, were doubtless, in the days of the city's habitation, covered thick with olive trees. Many "wild" olives and figs may be seen today. Then such a city, dominating a region of rich agricultural possibilities, must have been wealthy. There is no sign in the whole plain of any rival—Julias was evidently the chief city of the district: the fourteen villages, which we read were given with it to Agrippa, were very probably to some extent dependent on it, the chief city of the district. Today the neighborhood produces barley, wheat, maize, gourds, and melons, as well as walnuts, pomegranates, olives, figs, oranges, lemons, sycomore figs, and prickly pears. An equally important source of wealth must have been its position as the distributing center of fish all over Galilee. Today the chief fishing grounds on the lake are not at Tiberias nor at Tabighah but at el Bataihah. The fishing at the two former places depends much on the season; at the last good fishing is obtainable all the year round. From the shores of this delta, and from the Jordan itself, fish are daily taken in large numbers. Loads of fish come up to Safed daily, passing close to the foot of et Tell. It is true that because of the private ownership of the plain by a Moslem *effendi* at Damascus, as well as the untrustworthiness of the Bedawin, the fishermen do not live here—their homes are at Tiberias, and they make temporary shelters in reed-huts along the shore. If, however, at any time fishermen came here with their families they would unquestionably make their home at et Tell, if they were allowed to do so. With good roads el Araj or the Jordan mouth could be reached in half an hour, and the Jordan, at the ford, in half that time. Bethsaida could never have been, as some have suggested, half on one side of the river and half on the other, if et Tell were the site; it is much too far away. I have endeavored to make it clear that Bethsaida might have been a place of fishing, i. e., the center of the fishing industry for practically all Northern Galilee, and the home of the fishermen, without its being situated upon the miasmic sea-shore itself.

Et Tell to Safed.—At the southwest angle of the *tell*, near a beauti-

[1] For an interesting description of this plain see *The Jaulan*, pp. 106, 107. Schumacher gives its greatest length as four miles; its breadth in the center as 1½ miles.



THE SHORE OF THE SEA OF GALILEE NEAR TABIGHAH

ful *jamēz* (sycomore fig), is a copious fountain.[1] The main road runs past this due west to the ford and thence to Safed. We took a road to the right past the *jamēz*, crossed a rocky spur where were camped some Bedawin, and then traversed a beautiful lane shaded by fruit-trees and cacti. To our left lay several mills half hidden in luxuriant foliage, and no less than five mill streams, tier above tier, ran parallel with our road. We turned north and ascended the Valley of the Jordan, the noisy stream winding by many channels through masses of willows and oleanders a considerable distance below us. At length we reached ed Dikkeh, and examined the carved stones, the remains apparently of a synagogue.[2] Leaving ed Dikkeh under the guidance of a young Bedawy, we crossed the Jordan, here divided into no less than eight streams, several of them rapid and wide, and almost all with slippery, stony bottoms. On the farther bank we soon found a path—narrow but well marked throughout—leading to Safed. The first hour and a half we gradually ascended along and up the western side of the Jordan Valley; the river itself was, however, hidden in a deep and narrow bed between steep banks. After crossing the edge of the *ghōr* we saw before us the Safed hills, toward which we made a direct course, reaching our destination just four hours after crossing the Jordan ford.

[1] This apparently is called ᶜAin et Tell; it is not the large spring ᶜAin et Musmar, mentioned by Schumacher; this lies farther east. We crossed a considerable stream flowing westward to the Jordan before we reached the *tell*.

[2] I think it is worth considering that these remains, which today are a mere jumble of fragments, may possibly have been carried off at one time from et Tell.

THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUES

CHAPTER VI

THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUES

A number of ruins, which have been identified as those of synagogues, lie scattered over a comparatively small area of what is popularly known as Galilee. Successive explorers and archaeologists[1] have one after another approached the examination of them afresh, but each in turn has been compelled to accept the opinion, now universally held, that these buildings are of Jewish origin. The entire absence of shrines or idol pedestals is against their being pagan temples, the want of orientation and absence of apse tell against their being Christian churches, while several general characteristics are positively in favor of Jewish influence. The situation of these buildings, exclusively within an area where we know that Jewish influence was strong at the period within which they must belong, and the occurrence upon the surviving fragments of several of these buildings of Hebrew inscriptions—one at least of which must, from its position, belong to the time of the building's construction—are strong points in favor of this view. Further, the architectural ornamentation is in many of its details characteristically Jewish; the seven-branched candlestick, which occurs also on contemporary Jewish tombs, the vine branches and grape clusters, the palm tree and palm branches, the cup (thought by some to be the traditional idea of the Cup of Manna) are all ornaments familiar to us as the most characteristic adornments of the Jewish coinage. The geometrical design, known today as Solomon's seal , which occurs at Tell Hūm, is also traditionally of Hebrew origin. Even the frequently occurring lions are no objection, for these figures are common in later synagogue architecture.[2]

[1] For example, Renan (*Mission de Phénicie*, pp. 761–83); Robinson (*Biblical Researches*, Vols. II and III); Guérin (*Galilée*); Kitchener (*P. E. F. Memoirs*, Vol. I, and special papers); Wilson (P. E. F. special papers); Thiersch (*Mitt. der deutsch-orient. Gesellschaft*); Kohl (*Mitt. der deutsch-orient. Gesellschaft*, No. 29).

[2] See Kauffmann, "Art in the Synagogue," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1897.

The most striking thing about these buildings is their close architectural similarity. Although there must have been scores of synagogues in Galilee, these are the only ruins—unmistakably recognized as such—that have survived, and yet all are built on one general plan. The stones of which they are made are large, the external face is smoothly dressed, the inner is left rough to receive a coating of plaster; they are set without mortar. The extremely massive, almost clumsy character of the masonry has secured the survival of at least some of the original structures. With but one exception the synagogues face south; in at least six the main entrance is through a triple doorway consisting of a large and lofty central portal and two lower ones on each side. These doors have peculiar architrave moldings of a kind closely related in all the members of the group, and in several the lintels are highly ornamented. The doors were folding, with socket hinges, and were closed by bars fixed on the inside. Within the building there were rows of pillars resting on a plinth course running parallel to the side and back walls, and separating the space into a central lofty court or nave and a three-sided outer part—similar to the aisles and chancel of a church—divided into two stories by a wooden gallery. One of the most characteristic features of these buildings is the occurrence of "double" or more strictly speaking "clustered" columns at the junction of the lateral rows with the end row of columns. These clustered columns are square, like pillars, at the external angles, but internally are composed of two engaged columns—the transverse section being thus heart shaped . On account of their great bulk, and doubtless, too, their uselessness for later buildings for which ordinary columns may have been in demand, remains of these clustered columns have survived in almost all the ruins. Another feature, probably common to all the synagogues, was a stone bench for the worshipers against the three sides under the gallery.

Some of the sculptured decorations have been already mentioned, others will be touched upon when the individual ruins are described. But one rather surprising feature, common to all, is the occurrence of animal figures, especially lions (or lambs),[1] and eagles. In some

[1] These figures have almost everywhere been mutilated. The majority are certainly lions, but some, partly because of the rough carving and partly because of mutilation, cannot be identified with certainty.

of the synagogues human figures—usually intentionally mutilated—are found.

A brief description of the more important features of the Tell Hūm synagogue is probably the best method of giving an idea of the general features of the whole group. This building appears to have been the most ornate as well as the largest of these structures, and may have been the type after which the others were modeled. Although it may have been built having its principal entrance south, with the idea of facing toward Jerusalem—in a very general way—it is quite as likely that this and the Kerāzeh synagogue were placed thus to suit their surroundings, i. e., to turn their highly ornamented façades toward the lake. Built thus, they present their most pleasing aspect toward those sailing on the lake and afford the frequenters beautiful views from the terraces and open doors. The later synagogues being modeled after them followed the same general direction, although this was not, at any rate according to the Talmud,[1] the orthodox arrangement. The Tell Hūm synagogue was seventy-eight feet by fifty-nine feet. The triple southern doors opened upon a raised terrace, which was approached by flights of steps—four on the western and fourteen on the eastern side. Each of these staircases led from a paved street running toward the lake, some forty-four yards to the south. In the eastern wall is a small door leading into the court paved with limestone blocks previously described.[2] The northern and eastern boundaries of this court are at such irregular angles to the synagogue as to make it clear that this must belong to an earlier building. Several massive blocks of stone lying here are ornamented in a much more primitive way than the rest, and may be remains of this more ancient synagogue.

The southern façade was the part of the synagogue on which was lavished the greater part of the external decoration, the remaining outer walls being adorned by simple pilasters of low projection. From the fragments of the southern façade, which were found projected on the ground as much as eleven yards in front of the terrace by some mighty earthquake, it is possible to reconstruct its chief features.[3] On the lintel of the central portal were carved an eagle

[1] Tos. Meg. 4. 22 f.

[2] See plan, p. 75.

[3] The description is taken from that of Professor Kohl (*loc. cit.*).

and mythological figures ("genii") carrying garlands; on the side lintels were palm trees with date clusters, between which were animals now too much defaced for identification, but some at least of which appear to have been centaurs. Associated with the main door were a couple of handsomely carved consoles,[1] each with a palm tree with dates in high relief. Above this door was a window surmounted by a large stone beautifully carved in the form of a conch. The top of this wall apparently terminated in a gable, within the angle of which ran a much decorated arch. The interior was on the general plan referred to above.[2] A slightly raised plinth ran twelve and one-half feet inside each of the lateral walls and seven and one-half feet inside the north wall. Upon this structure stood six stylobates for round columns on each side and two at each end, while at the corners stood elaborate special supports for the bases of the clustered columns. The columns themselves were monoliths fourteen feet high, crowned by debased Corinthian capitals carrying a cornice with a highly ornamented frieze. Numerous well-preserved fragments of this frieze show a great variety of ornament—foliage, rosettes, grapes and pomegranates, stars, pentagrams and hexagrams. On the northern frieze there were small animals—lions or lambs—emerging from acanthus leaves, but these have everywhere been intentionally mutilated. On the back (i. e., the outer edge) of the cornice were rows of squared holes for the wooden beams which supported the gallery, and from the cornice arose a second series of smaller columns which supported the gabled wooden roof. The back walls of this gallery appear to have been considerably decorated with half-columns in relief. There was thus a lofty central part extending the whole height of the building, around three sides of which ran rows of columns. The space outside the columns was divided into two stories, a lower one some twenty feet or more high, on the same floor-level as the center part, with stone benches on the three sides set against the outside wall, and an upper part or gallery with a second series of smaller columns in front and half columns in relief at the back, against the outer wall. This gallery,

[1] The position of these consoles may be inferred from the Kefr Berʿim ruin (see p. 117.

[2] See plan, p. 75.

RUINS OF SYNAGOGUE AT IRBID—LOWER GALILEE
The cliffs of the Wady Hamam behind.

judging from modern analogy, may have been for the women. The general effect of the interior with its double series of columns, the Corinthian capitals and the elaborate frieze, all of pure white limestone, must have been very striking. But even more effective must have been the appearance as viewed from the lake of the massive and highly decorated front, standing out pure white against its surroundings of black buildings and black basaltic rocks.

The synagogue of Kerāzeh in the hills to the north of Tell Hūm is slightly smaller than that just described, but follows it very closely in architectural features—more so than any others. Only here, and at Tell Hūm, are the capitals of the Corinthian order. It is entirely built of the black basaltic stone of the neighborhood; and doubtless on this account, because of its extreme hardness, the finish of the sculpturing is much inferior to the work at Tell Hūm. The decorations are very similar, and are an interesting supplement to the Tell Hūm work because the figures of animals and man have to a much greater extent escaped mutilation. There are many small animal figures, some rather grotesque human forms, and some curious four-legged animals which the German explorers take to be centaurs, but possibly intended for cherubim. Four large stones (like "niche heads") most beautifully carved out as conches with delicate surrounding borders, show a very superior workmanship to the rest. It is the opinion of Messrs. Kohl and Watzinger that they belonged to a *baldachino*, the forerunner of the "ark" of modern synagogues, in which are kept the scrolls of the law. Indications that such a structure stood in the central court not far from the door were found in others of the synagogues.

The remaining ruins of undoubted synagogues are scattered to the northwest and north of the lake. At Irbid—the ancient Arbela—at the commencement of the steep descent to the lake down the Wady Hamam, less than two hours' ride west of Tell Hūm, are the ruins of a synagogue peculiar in three respects: first, the building, though otherwise undoubtedly one of this class, has its great triple doorway facing east instead of south. This is not done in order to obtain an outlook to the lake, for only Gennesaret is visible between the high cliffs that shut in the great gorge of the Wady Hamam (see illustration); it is an inevitable result of the situation, for the

building occupies ground that rapidly slopes downward to the north. Second, the architecture is very mixed, both debased Corinthian and "Jewish" Ionic capitals[1] occur, and basalt is mixed with the limestone. Third, the building, after partial ruin, was reconstructed as a mosque and a large *mihrab*[2] has been built in the south wall. The entire site has long been deserted, and the synagogue in particular has for ages been a limestone quarry for the neighboring inhabitants.

RUINS OF SYNAGOGUE AT UMM EL ᶜAMED

One hour's ride due west of Irbid, along the track of an ancient (probably Roman) road, is a ruin known as Khurbet Umm el ᶜAmed, i. e., the ruin of the mother of columns. From considerable distances on all sides a great limestone "clustered" column can be seen standing up from amidst the ruins of a small town (see illustration). The site is a remarkable one. The ruins occupy the entire surface of an outcrop of lava occurring in the middle of a saddle of lime-

[1] That is, a modification of Ionic peculiar to these Jewish buildings.

[2] A niche pointing the direction to Mecca.

stone which forms the eastern boundary of the great plain el Battauf, known to Josephus as the "Plain of Asochis."[1] The natural drainage of the eastern half of the plain is toward the Lake of Galilee; but this being obstructed by the ridge, much of it becomes, after the winter's rains, an impassable bog, and in prehistoric times must have been a shallow lake. It is probable that there is water close under the surface of the town site; for, though there is no visible spring, there is a considerable patch of water-loving reeds at the highest part of the ruins. The site has long been deserted, and we have no record of its ancient name. The newly excavated synagogue remains lie to the southern side of the town, and, in contrast to the rest of the ruins, are of limestone. The outline of the original ground plan has been recovered, the plinth course is entire, and some of the column bases are in their original situation. A good deal of the masonry has been transferred to a neighboring mediaeval building, itself now a ruin. Like the others described, this building had three doorways to the south; over the main portal was a lintel with two lions standing to the right and left of a vase, each with his foot on what is apparently the head or skull of a bull. The capitals of the columns are a peculiar Jewish modification of Ionic which occurs also in the northern group of synagogues. The floor was paved with the white mosaic that is so common in Roman buildings in Palestine.

The remaining recognized synagogue-ruins form a group to the west, northwest, and north of Safed. They are all near together, no member of the group being more than six hours' ride from Tell Hūm. At the Maronite (Christian) village of Kefr Berʿim, on the highroad from Safed to Tyre, there is a synagogue ruin of great importance. Some appear to have recognized a fanciful connection between Berʿim (which is apparently a proper name) and Purim, for the tomb of Queen Esther used for long to be pointed out here and the Jews were accustomed to assemble here to read the book of Esther during the Feast of Purim. The place was visited as a sacred spot by mediaeval Jews, and by the sixteenth century these pilgrims speak of the synagogues as in ruin. The great synagogue occupies a position at very nearly the highest part of the modern village. The ruin is of special

[1] Josephus, *Vita*, § 41, etc.; see p. 8.

importance because it contains a great part of the southern façade (see illustration), thus enabling us to picture the appearance of the corresponding part in the other ruins. In front of this triple entrance is a kind of porch, with a sunk court, one column of which is still in position. On the lintel of the main portal is a wreath which was apparently supported by mythological figures (genii), now almost entirely defaced. Over this door was an arched window, and above each side entrance rectangular windows. The figures which once

SOUTHERN FAÇADE OF THE SYNAGOGUE AT KEFR BERʿIM—UPPER GALILEE

decorated these windows have also been destroyed. Under the eastern window is a much defaced Hebrew inscription. The internal plan is identical with those of the buildings already described. The area was a few years back occupied by some hovels, but has now been cleared.

In the fields to the north of the village there was till recently a very striking doorway belonging to a second smaller synagogue. It is figured in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Memoirs*[1] and when I

[1] *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 232.

first visited the place in 1893 it was standing. In 1907 I found it gone, and learned that the magnificent sculptured monoliths of which it was composed had been thrown down and cut up for building stones. Upon the lintel was a wreath and two much mutilated lamb-like animals, besides a somewhat illegible Hebrew inscription, which, according to Renan, read: "Peace be upon this place and all the places of Israel. Joseph the Levite the son of Levi put up this lintel. A blessing rest upon his work." This smaller

RUINS OF SYNAGOGUE NEAR EL JISH—UPPER GALILEE

synagogue had only one doorway: the ground-plan was uncovered and measured by the Palestine Exploration Fund explorers, but it is today entirely covered up.

At el Jish, the ancient Gischala of Josephus, about two miles southeast of Kefr Berʿim, there are scattered remains of what was once apparently a synagogue of the same class as those described. The original site is probably covered by buildings belonging to the modern town. About a mile to the northeast of el Jish, on the northern bank of the deep Wady esh Shaghur, are the remains of a building which, like the smaller synagogue of Kefr Berʿim, had

only one door. Parts of the outer walls have quite disappeared, but the door foundations, the plinth course, and some of the stylobates remain in position (see illustration). On the under-surface of the great lintel is carved an eagle with garlands. A worn Hebrew inscription on one of the columns reads: "Joseph ben Nahum built this arch. May a blessing fall on him." The synagogue was divided by the column rows into three aisles, each a little over fifteen feet wide.

Nearly three miles to the south of el Jish is the little Mohammedan village of Meron, a place sacred to the Jews on account of the great Talmudic scholars who, according to tradition, lie there buried. Here is the very curious (traditional) rock-tomb of Rabbi Hillel and his thirty-six disciples, that of Rabbi Shammai, and of Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai. At the tomb of the last named which, with that of his son, is included in a modern synagogue building, a great annual feast of two days is held every spring, to which come Jews from all parts of the world. While bonfires are lighted and wild revelry is held at this site of very doubtful authenticity, the genuine Jewish relic—the ruined synagogue on the hillside to the north—stands deserted and entirely neglected by Hebrew sentiment; the Jews indeed do not appear to recognize at all that this is a work of their own people. The ruins occupy a prominent situation against the eastern flank of a small rocky knoll, and from them a beautiful view of the Lake of Galilee is visible. Only the central and the western smaller portals of the great southern façade remain (see illustration). Upon them are architrave moldings identical with those at Kefr Ber'im. The greater part of the synagogue area has been cut out of the solid rock, and upon the rock-floor may still be traced the original position of the columns. The whole eastern side of the building has fallen down and for some reason, evidently the deliberate act of man, the whole internal area has been cleared and fragments of columns, bases, stylobates, and capitals strew the hillside below. The southern façade, the general area-dimensions, and the surviving fragments show that this was a synagogue practically identical in style with that at Kefr Ber'im.

A couple of hours' ride—about five miles on the map direct—to the northeast of Meron is Khurbet Nebratain. These ruins occupy

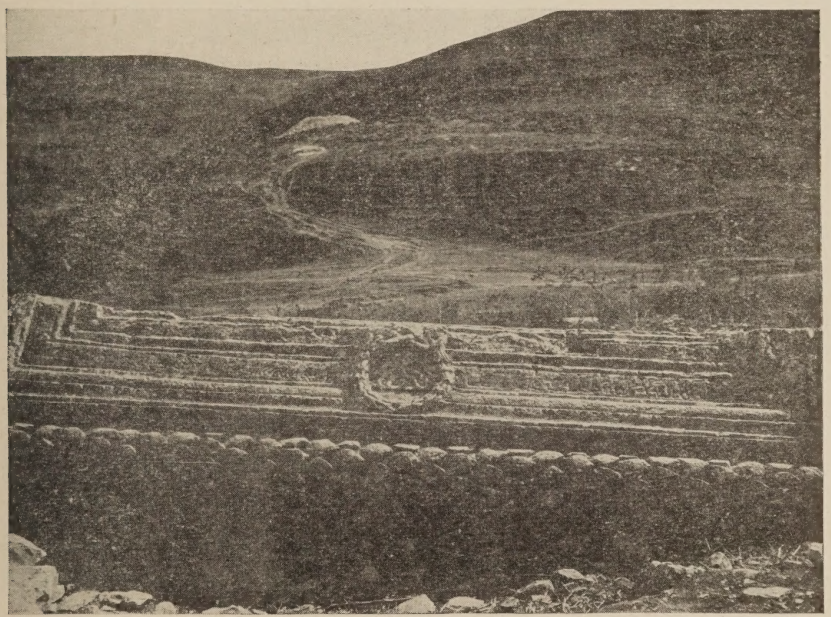
a couple of low hills, known today as Nebra and Nebratain[1] respectively, in a deep valley between Safed and the Jordan. The Upper Jordan Valley and Hermon are visible from the site. The position appears somewhat secluded, but it may be seen from several much frequented paths along the sides of the surrounding mountains. Both hills are strewn thick with Graeco-Roman pottery, and have evidently been but little inhabited since that period. The ancient name is unknown. The synagogue of Nebratain occupies the lower

SOUTHERN FAÇADE OF SYNAGOGUE AT MERON—UPPER GALILEE

northernmost hill, and the foundation courses have now been uncovered by the German archaeologists. It proves to be one of the smaller buildings, dimensions 53 ft., 7 in. by 37 ft., 9 in., with a single, southern, door. The lintel is perfect (see illustration); on it is a leaf pattern in the middle of which is a wreath inclosing a seven-branched candlestick, while below, running the whole length of the stone, is a cryptic Hebrew inscription—the letters apparently being employed rather for ornament than for word-use. Internally there were

[1] Nebra means "high place" and Nebratain, "two high places;" the names certainly suggest that some temple or synagogue was on each of the hills.

two rows of four columns, and a fifth clustered column at each northern end. On the side of one of the stylobates is cut the figure of a hare, and other ornamental fragments include the figure of a lion and a sculptured vase—cut in relief—out of which a vine branch with grapes issues on each side. On the southerly hill Nebra are also remains which may have belonged to a second synagogue, but there is not enough for certainty. The lime kiln which crowns the height tells its own tale of recent destruction.



THE INSCRIBED LINTEL AT NEBRATAIN

This completes the list of synagogues of which we can be certain. Tell Hūm, Kerāzeh, Irbid, Umm el ᶜAmed, Kefr Berᶜim, and Meron all contribute something to the materials for the ideal reconstruction of the large, triple-door synagogue of the period; at el Jish, Kefr Berᶜim, and Nebratain we have ruins of very similar buildings on a smaller scale. In the village of el Jish, at the neighboring villages of Sifsaf and Saᶜsaᶜ, as well as at Tiberias, there are remains which make it clear that similar ruins once existed there. At ed Dikkeh, a picturesque spot by the Jordan just before it enters el Bataihah, there are scattered capitals and columns and stones ornamented with

vines—all of black basaltic rock—which appear to have belonged to a Jewish building. The German archaeologists traced remains of the triple doorway, but considered the building was a synagogue of a later period than those described. The same may be said of the ruins at Umm el Kanatīr[1] and other places in the Jaulan which do not concern us here.

At Keisiun, about three miles north of Nebratain, are the ruins (see illustration) of a columnated building which may have been

RUINS OF SYNAGOGUE AT EL KEISIUN

that of a synagogue, particularly as there are Jewish tombs in the immediate neighborhood, and the place is probably the Kasioun mentioned in the Jewish itineraries. The remains, however, present none of the characteristic features of the group of buildings just described. This is important, because a Greek inscription belonging to the time of Septimus Severus, which was found here, was utilized by Renan in assigning a date in the second century A.D. for all these buildings. At ʿAlma, six miles north of Safed, M. Guérin also found the ruins of a synagogue, among them a lintel with a single line of

[1] See Schumacher, *The Jaulan*, pp. 260–65.

Hebrew which read "(Peace be) upon this place and all the places of Israel." Somewhat doubtful synagogue remains also exist at Khurbet es Semmuka on Mount Carmel, and at Khurbet et Taiyebeh near Shefa ʿAmir.

The important buildings at Kades, Yarūn, and Belat, once thought to be synagogues, are certainly not Jewish, and probably were all pagan temples, that at Yarūn having been at a later period converted into a Christian basilica. Each of these three buildings preserves some architectural features common to the synagogue group. At Kades we find sculptured vine leaves with grape clusters as well as a fine eagle upon the lintel; at Yarūn the beautiful carved palm trees with dates remind us much of similar work at Tell Hūm; at Belat, among the sixteen columns on this lonely height, the same double clustered columns so characteristic of the synagogues occur. Indeed, this may, as Kitchener suggests, be the clew to the introduction of this special feature into Jewish architecture. Belat is within sight of Tyre, where similar gigantic clustered columns of red granite (afterward used in a Christian cathedral) once formed a part of the great temple of Melcarth who, we read,[1] "was worshiped at Tyre in the form of two pillars."

When we come to discuss the age of these synagogue ruins we find a good deal of uncertainty. We shall probably all echo the words of one[2] who was among the first to face the problem: "One attaches a value of the highest order to these buildings which we should like to date back to the times of the Herods or the later Maccabeans, when one thinks of the discussions which they must have heard and of the feet which must have walked in them." Unfortunately our wishes cannot influence the facts. For such an early date as (say) Herod the Great we may argue from the somewhat unwieldy character of the masonry, the absence of mortar and the occurrence of animal, mythological, and even human figures in the decorations—this last would appear to be an improbable occurrence after the rise of Talmudic influence. It must also be noted that with but one exception the buildings are constructed looking southward, instead of to the east which became the orthodox direction in Talmudic times.

[1] Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 208.

[2] Renan, *Mission de Phénicie*, p. 772.

As regards Tell Hūm, the largest and probably the earliest of these buildings, it may further be asked: Is it possible that this building could have been erected far in the Christian era when, as was mentioned in the chapter on Capernaum, this place became, apparently in either the apostolic or sub-apostolic age, a stronghold of *Minîm*[1] (heretics), i. e., Christians? Lastly, anticipating what will be said farther on, do we know enough of the architecture of Palestine in the first Christian century to be able to dogmatize as to what could or could not have been built in that period? Having stated these suggestions I must now record the opinion of those whom one must consider architectural and archaeological authorities. With one voice, though often on differing grounds, they ascribe these buildings to the second or even the third century in the Christian era; later than this they cannot be. First, Renan dated them to the end of the second century—a conclusion based partly upon the before-mentioned Greek inscription of Keisiun; his main arguments, however, that the style belongs to the second Antonines and that such buildings are most explicable at this particular period of Jewish history, are valid today. Lord Kitchener[2] bases his arguments chiefly on historical grounds and dates the buildings "between 150 and 300 A. D." I much doubt, however, whether many will follow him in his hypothesis that the synagogues "were forced upon the people (Jews) by their Roman rulers at a time when they were completely submissive to their power and that directly they were able they deserted such pagan buildings as disloyalty to their religion." Nor is it necessary to conclude, as he does, that the Jews in these buildings prayed "with their backs to Jerusalem;" it is much more probable that they faced toward the open doors. Professors Kohl and Watzinger, who have made the later Roman architecture of Syria their special study, and who did such epoch-making work at Baalbec, are very positive on archaeological grounds alone that these buildings cannot be earlier than Baalbec, and they would date them to the early part of the third century A. D.

In the absence of any historical mention of these buildings and of any contemporary datable inscription within them we are thrown back upon historical probability and the interpretation of the archi-

[1] See p. 88.

[2] *Loc. cit.*

tecture. On these heads the opinion of specialists concurs, and unless new light is thrown on the subject, to their opinion we must submit.

A report has been current in Palestine that the Jews intend to purchase these ruins. It is sincerely to be hoped that this is the case. It is quite extraordinary how lukewarm is the interest exhibited by the Jewish people in these venerable and precious relics of their race. Nothing is more eloquent on this head than the very scanty reference made to them in their recent monumental work, the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.[1] One thing is certain, that unless something is done speedily, the last characteristic fragments will disappear. They have been melting rapidly away all through the centuries; but now that their last foundations are uncovered, the Fellahîn will carry off every available fragment for both building-stone and lime, for which there is an increasing demand and a rising market.

[1] Article "Synagogue."

GALILEE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

CHAPTER VII

GALILEE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

From whatever aspect we approach the study of Galilee, our conclusions have the most vital interest in so far as they cause us to picture this land when it became the home of Him who is pre-eminently "The Man of Galilee." If anything can enable us to see what He saw, to be influenced as He must have been, or to reconstruct in our imagination the human life of Him who is our example for all the ages, then our efforts are not in vain. We may also recall in passing that the same environment profoundly influenced the apostles and many members of the infant church.

In a previous article we dealt with the subject of the size of Galilee in the time of Christ. It was a small land, by no means so large as the natural boundaries would suggest. If we may judge from the description of Josephus,[1] the southern boundary was, for practical purposes, rather the northern than the southern edge of the great plain. The region described as "Lower Galilee" was all included, but the northern boundary traversed the mountain region on a line drawn from the deep Wady Hindaj (just south of Kades) on the east to the neighborhood of el Jish, and thence south along the line of Jebal Jermak till these mountains abut on Lower Galilee. All north and west of this line was Tyrian territory (as was Carmel on the southwest) with doubtless scattered Jewish communities here and there, like that we read of as existing at Caesarea Philippi. Although the mountain district of Safed belonged to the Galilee of Christ, yet we have no proof from the gospels that he ever visited this district.

The most striking thing about this region is the way it was hemmed in on all sides by hostile neighbors. How much the Jews hated these gentiles may be seen in the pages of Josephus where he describes how they rose and massacred them all over the land. The Tyrians, as

[1] Xyloth (now Iksal) is mentioned by Josephus as on the boundary, and Gaba (now Sheikh Abreik) appears to have been a kind of frontier settlement at the western end of the plain.

Josephus calls them—or, as they are called in the New Testament,[1] the Syro-Phenicians—lay in contact with Jewish Galilee all along the northern and western borders. Jewish villages for miles must have faced villages of an alien race and faith, and doubtless in all the larger urban resorts the followers of different faiths were then, as now, in little semi-hostile cliques. Ever present on the eastern frontier and invading the lowland in places, especially along the Jordan, were the nomadic Bedawin. All along the southern frontier, Galilee borders by an ill-defined boundary upon the territory of the unfriendly Samaritans. Besides the Semitic elements, many Greeks and thoroughly Graecized Syrians must have been distributed all over the land. Scythopolis and Gadara, both counted to Galilee in a loose kind of way, were two of the great cities of the Decapolis; here, and all along the eastern shores of the lake, Greek influence was widely diffused. At Tiberias was a newly erected city, pagan and predominantly Roman. In all the political machinery, in military organization and in much that makes for civilization, the Romans were much in evidence. Only perhaps in the quieter village life of such secluded places as Nazareth were Jewish ideals preserved more pure.

In such surroundings the Galileans appear to have developed marked characteristics of their own. It must be remembered that this region ceased to be Israelitish after the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, and even as late as Maccabean times the settlers there were so few and ill-protected that Simon brought them all away for safety during his struggles with the heathen (I Macc. 5:21). It is surmised that it was resettled in the reign of Aristobulus I.[2] Between that time and the days of Christ the Jewish inhabitants of Galilee must have flourished exceedingly, but under conditions which would encourage independence of character, resourcefulness and readiness to defend themselves and their property. Their comparatively small numbers, and their being surrounded on all sides by hostile religions, would naturally make them tenacious of their own religious

[1] Mark 7:26.

[2] If the suggestion of Schürer is correct that the Iturea conquered by that monarch was Galilee, it is quite probable that some proportion of the Galileans were proselytes from the non-Israelites of the district, but there is no reason to think the numbers from this source were large.

customs; while their isolation from Jerusalem would, one might expect, produce some differences in religious customs in the direction of less stress on minor points of detail. The history of Josephus and the references in talmudic literature to the Galilean Jews agree in showing that this was the case.

In order to picture the district it is necessary to form some idea of the density of the population. This has been a subject of considerable controversy. While it is impossible to give figures of any certainty, there are certain points which may guide us to some conclusion.

There is no question whatever that the population was considerably greater than that of today. Galilee was a country of rich fertility and very highly cultivated;[1] even now, when so much is neglected, no part of Palestine is more productive. Extensive tracts now given over entirely to brushwood or thistles might once again be converted into splendid groves of olives and figs; the terracing of the hills has everywhere fallen into ruins, the bare rock showing over miles of gentle slopes which once were vineyards and orchards. How well suited is the land for vine-culture is shown by the results obtained in the modern Jewish colonies around Safed. Something of the ancient fame[2] of Galilee as a producer of olive oil is still maintained by the magnificent groves of what the natives call "Roman" olives near Rameh. The natural resources of the land have been previously referred to more in detail. But while allowing that the population was considerably greater than today, it is difficult to accept the numbers given by Josephus. In his works it is stated[3] that in Galilee there were 204 cities and villages, and in another passage he says: "Moreover the cities lie here very thick; and the very many villages are everywhere so full of people by the richness of the soil that the very least of them contain above 15,000 inhabitants."[4] The late Dr. Merrill in his well-known book, *Galilee in the Time of Christ*,[5] argues that this statement may be literally correct and that Galilee actually contained a population of upward of three millions. To the great majority of those who have looked into the question the statements of Josephus are, as they stand, manifestly absurd. The numbers may be a wilful exaggeration, which, considering they were so

[1] *B. J.*, III, iii, 2.
[2] *B. J.*, II, xxi, 2; Deut. 33:34.
[3] *Vita*, 45.
[4] *B. J.*, III, iii, 2.
[5] P. 62.

easy of refutation, seems hardly possible; or the statement about the 15,000 is misplaced by an error in copying and ought to apply to the cities only. But in any case the statement, as it stands, is a precarious one on which to base any calculation of total population.

Galilee today is full of villages. One of 1,500 inhabitants is considered a very large one indeed, and some of the villages have as few as 50 adult inhabitants. The mean population of the thirty-nine villages of the Safed district, including all inhabited centers except Safed itself, is 280 or, counting in the young children not included in the census, about 500 inhabitants. The largest towns in the whole of Galilee, with the solitary exception of Safed (23,000 inhabitants) contain a smaller population than 15,000. But it may be argued that the villages of those days were very much larger. This is not the testimony of the existing ruins, mostly shapeless heaps of stones scattered all over the land. First, it may be noted that these ruins are most plentiful not in the district we are considering, but rather in the environs of Tyre. Secondly, it is evident that they belong to various ages; some to villages occupied *before* New Testament times, and not in the days of Christ (as may be proved by the pottery fragments); and others, a much larger number, are purely Arab remains from the centuries just before, during and after the Crusades. It has never been systematically done, but if the *khurbets* (i. e., the ruins) of Galilee were catalogued according to their antiquity, I believe—judging from those I have myself examined—that considerably less than half would show evidence of belonging to the period we are now considering.

When we come to the extent of these ruins a still more striking thing is noticeable. Very many of them are exceedingly small, representing indeed little but the ruined walls of a single group of buildings; and as a whole most of them cover an area about the same as that covered by a modern village of medium size. They are manifestly not the ruins of considerable towns. Were the statements in Josephus correct, we should find enormous areas of ruins covering acres. Such is the case in a few places, for example at Beisân (Scythopolis), Tiberias and Suffuriah (Sepphoris). Further, at the identified sites of many of the more important towns we see an area of ruin quite consistent with the remains of large villages or small towns.

Salamis, Bersabe (if at Abu Shebʿa), Kefr Anan, Cabul, Abela, Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida (Julias), Gischala, Simonias (Semunieh), could never have been cities in the sense we think of cities today, but from their frequent mention in Josephus, these appear to have been some of the more important places in Galilee, and it is impossible that there were many sites now unoccupied as large as these.

The population of the whole, as described in the Galilee volume of the *Palestine Exploration Memoirs*, was, according to the estimates made at the time of the survey, 103,000. Today these numbers may with confidence be doubled.[1] Allowing for young children not included in the government returns, the population of this large area of 1,341 square miles, with its 312 towns and villages, may with safety be estimated at about 250,000. This district is very much larger than that described as Galilee by Josephus which, at an outside estimate, could not have included more than 900 square miles. It includes the whole district of Tyre and all the coast to Carmel. The denseness of the population by the above estimates works out at 186 inhabitants to the square mile. The present mean population of the villages is about 500 and that of the towns Haifa, Akka, Nazareth, Safed, and Tiberias about 13,000. I think the utmost we could allow is that the average population of the smaller towns and villages was double that of today, or, say, 1,000 inhabitants to each; while of the four really great cities of the district,[2] Sepphoris, Tiberias, Tarichaea, and Scythopolis, a mean of 50,000 to each would I suppose be as much as we can believe probable in normal times (in times of war such towns being fortified would, of course, be temporarily much more

[1] The following statistics collected from the Safed district make me believe it is safe to calculate that the population of Galilee has *more than doubled* in the last twenty-five years. The present population from the official figures in this district is 29,055 (5,594 Jews, 2,131 Greek Church or Greek Catholics—chiefly the latter—916 Maronite Christians, 1,536 Druzes, and 19,878 Moslems). These numbers, however, do not include a considerable number of foreign subjects, especially Jews, who may safely be reckoned as at least 5,000 more, making a total of 34,055 persons distributed over one city, Safed, and thirty-nine small towns and villages. The Palestine Exploration Fund estimate for the same area, counting up all the towns and villages, was 14,030, made up of 2,350 Christians, 1,600 Jews, 200 Druzes, 9,880 Moslems. Here again there are a great many foreign Jews omitted from the count—perhaps 1,500 is not too many, making the total 15,530 or a little less than half the present population.

[2] *Vita*, 27.

crowded). If there be reckoned 200 small towns and villages with a population together of 200,000, and the four great cities with an equal population (200,000) we get 400,000 as the probable population of Galilee in the time of Christ, giving a density of population of about 440 to the square mile—six times the density of population by the old Palestine Exploration Fund estimates, and two and one-half times the density of population according to the most liberal recent estimates. It is inconceivable that the Galilee of the Jews could have included a population larger than this, and it is probable this estimate errs on the side of excess.

Among the villages of Galilee, Nazareth appears to have been one of the smaller; it is not important enough in size or situation to figure in any of the stirring events in the pages of Josephus, although its neighbor Japha is frequently mentioned. Where the ancient village stood it is impossible to say—none of the traditions are of value; but it cannot have been far from the one spring—the "Virgin's fountain," and must have nestled somewhere in the pretty valley shut out by its circle of hills from the rush and hurry of the busy life which pulsated on all its sides. Today a high road passes through Nazareth, but this is clearly not a natural route to anywhere. The ancient high roads passed from west to east, one along the foot of the Galilean hills to the south, and another through Sepphoris and the Battauf to the north. It is the sanctity of the spot alone which has dragged the road out of its natural route to mount the steep hills of Nazareth. It was long the fashion to insist on the remoteness of the early home of Jesus, whilst later writers have rather emphasized opposite conditions and pictured his boyhood as within the busy arena of politicians, soldiers, merchants, and amid all the movements of that stirring time. Surely there is truth in both aspects. Nazareth itself was quietly secluded, shut off from the things of the world. It was not despised for any demerit, but was simply insignificant as compared with its famous neighbors.

At the same time, it was in the center of a district of teeming and strenuous life. Within sight of its surrounding hills rushed the eager tide of civilization. From these heights the eye could wander over scene after scene at once of Israel's ancient history and of present struggles. Southward spread the great plain with its memories of

NAZARETH

Deborah and Barak, of Gideon and Elijah, of Ahab and Jezebel, while beyond rose the mountains of those people of whom we hear so much in the gospels—the despised but feared Samaritans. The once sacred shrine, Mount Tabor—in Christ's time a fortified stronghold—was visible to the southeast; while southwest stretched the long line of Carmel, from the lofty eastern end where, by tradition, Elijah championed the name of Jehovah before the prophets of Baal and all the hosts of backsliding Israel, to the further end which dips gently toward the misty sea to form the southern boundary of the great Bay of Akka. Here landed the legions of arrogant Rome, the ambitious soldier, the crafty politician, all those referred to in the sayings of Jesus as seeking "after all these things."[1] To the north we see, fold after fold, the hills of lower Galilee. Almost at one's feet, but an hour's ride away, lay Sepphoris, the scene in those days of many an heroic deed, then soon to lose (though but temporarily) the distinction of being the capital city of the district in favor of the godless and degraded Tiberias. The land for sixteen miles around Sepphoris is reported in the Talmud to have "flowed with milk and honey." Behind Sepphoris lay the mountains of esh Shaghûr and the loftier crags of Upper Galilee, culminating in the Jebal Jermak range. To the northeast snowclad Hermon was visible, while due west the hills of the Nazareth range rose higher and shut off the view.

Nazareth was thus a secluded village in the midst of a Roman province of very considerable importance. But an hour's walk to the north was the capital and a great high road. Less than an hour to the south was another great road along which chariots, horsemen and armies hurried backward and forward. Within a very few miles were the important villages of Japha, Simonias, Gebatha and Bethlehem of Zebulon. It was surrounded on all sides by a busy, worldly life, with alien races, languages and customs. To the south were the Samaritans; Carmel, the whole coast plain, and the mountains to the northwest belonged to the Tyrians (Syro-Phenicians) enjoying self-government, while Hermon and much of the land to the east of the lake was pagan, Greek or Roman. When we consider that the youthful Jesus viewed these alien lands perhaps almost daily from the lofty hills above his home, what added interest it gives to his refer-

[1] Matt. 6:32.

ences to them: "If the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in dust and ashes."[1]

We cannot doubt that it was to the far-seen land across the Jordan, very fascinating to those viewing it from the west, that the prodigal son went when he went to a "far country," and there fed swine. With what prejudice must the people of Nazareth have looked across the great plain southward to the hills of those hereditary enemies of theirs, and yet how gentle and loving was this Nazarene in all his doings with them.[2]

Although we may not know the exact spot on which stood the village home of Jesus, there is very much in the village life, in the recurring seasons and in nature's gracious gifts which must be today as they were in the days when this was his earthly home. Thus every year the wondrous miracle of spring must have developed itself as it does today, and from the long and hard baked earth there emerged, under the influence of the gentle showers and genial sunshine, that marvelous carpet of green leaves and gorgeous flowers which makes spring in Palestine such a never-ending surprise and delight. Only those who have lived through the cold, wet, lifeless winter in Galilee can fully realize the unthinkable change which comes with the spring. First come the crocuses on the level fields and the cyclamen in the rocky crevices, each putting forth its early flowers from the bulbs of stored-up nourishment; then the anemones —scarlet, purple, white—the gladioli, the purple irises, the pink and yellow flaxes, the crumpled-leaved cistus, and the ubiquitous primrose-tinted Palestinian scabious. It is difficult to believe that, in spite of a much higher cultivation, these beauties of nature were absent. Indeed, it is surely to them that our Lord refers when he says "consider the lilies of the field how they grow."[3] A little later in the spring, miles of hillside and valley are waving with grain, and the great plain in particular is green almost from end to end. The fig trees now shoot forth their delicate green leaves and tiny figs; the pomegranates deck out their soberer green with brilliant scarlet blossoms; the foliage of the grapes appears—all signs that the winter

[1] Luke 10:13.

[2] Luke 9:56; 10:33; 17:16; John 4:7–42.

[3] Matt. 6:28–30.

is past and the summer is near at hand.[1] The hilltops are covered by the flocks of sheep and goats, while all the valleys re-echo to the shepherds' pipes.

As summer advances and the green blades of the grain arise, groups of women and girls go forth and root out the weeds and tares[2] from among the ripening wheat. A few weeks more and the camels, loaded high with wheat and barley, pour into Nazareth from the plain, until the village threshing-floor is covered thick with piled up bundles. Then come the weeks of threshing when the horses, donkeys, and cattle, by long stamping, reduce the heaps to the homogeneous mass of broken stalks (*tibn*) and grain. With the late summer breezes come the long afternoons of winnowing, when the light and worthless chaff is blown away and the precious grain is gathered in an ever growing pile to be garnered—after washing and drying—into the granaries; while the surplus chaff is burnt up.[3]

And now the families go out into the fig gardens and vineyards and watch the ripening fruit until, just before the rains, these too are gathered in. As the days grow shorter, and the winds cooler, the stubble is burned off the fields, great blazing fires being visible on the hillsides far away. At last the winter's rains descend and the sudden floods sweep down the long dry valley bottom.[4] At this time the peasant goes out with his plow upon his shoulder to furrow the softened earth; and with him walks the sower, sometimes scattering the seeds broadcast before the plow, as in the parable,[5] at other times following behind it and laying it in the newly turned furrows. The gathering of brushwood from the thickets for fuel and the beating-down of the olives are occupations of the early winter, and bring the agricultural year to a close.

Such are some of the scenes amid which, from year to year, Jesus moved. The man who planted the vineyard,[6] the shepherd who went to seek his lost sheep,[7] the husbandman who spared for one year more his fruitless fig tree,[8] the woman who lost her piece of

[1] Cant. 2:11; Luke 21:30.
[2] Cf. Matt. 13:41.
[3] Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17; Isa. 5:24.
[4] The floods of the parable, Matt. 7:25.
[5] Matt. 13:3, etc.
[6] Matt. 21:33, etc.
[7] Luke 15:4.
[8] Luke 13:6.

money[1] (possibly from her head-dress[2])—may not these and such parables have been founded upon actual incidents in Jesus' boyhood life? All His teaching bears the impress of this village life, though occasionally there comes also an echo of wider interests, as in the parables of the marriage of the king's son,[3] the ten talents,[4] the unjust steward,[5] and the king going to war.[6]

While nature provided Jesus with such abundant illustrations, the climate made possible a mode of life for his ministry only practicable in such a land. Days of unbroken sunshine and nights of pleasant warmth can be counted upon for six or seven months every year; it is possible, without fear of rain, to gather crowds on the hillsides day and night all over the district. The moonlight nights are perfect for rest out of doors; or, if the days are oppressively hot, for travel. Never was a land more suited for itinerant work and open-air preaching. Even in midwinter it is no uncommon thing to have six weeks of sunshine without a shower. The conditions of peasant life in the east, though hard in many ways, leave much spare time, especially between sowing and harvest, for leisure and thought; food is cheap and wants are few; what is not done today can often be equally well done tomorrow. Certainly the modern Fellah finds plenty of time for sitting about, particularly in the winter, though working night and day in times of stress.

Today, as then, the sick are everywhere—the fever-stricken, the blind or semi-blind, the epileptic (now as then supposed to be "possessed"), the dumb because deaf, the palsied, withered hands and feet, and the leprous. It is sufficient for it to be known in any village that a *hakim* is there for every lane to disgorge just such a crowd as that which, ever renewed, followed the footsteps of our Master. The *ashshur* (tax-farmer) is as ubiquitous and as hated as of old. It is a saying in Galilee that if you would rid yourself of ants it is enough to sprinkle on their holes some of the earth on which an *ashshur* has stood—contact with anything so vile will drive even the ants precipitately away.

[1] Luke 15:8.

[2] This is a popular suggestion, but against this it may be urged that ancient coins, bored for sewing to the headdress like modern Turkish coins, are not found.

[3] Matt. 22:2. [4] Matt. 25:14. [5] Luke 16:1–13. [6] Luke 14:16.

There is indeed much in the Galilee of today to remind us of that of eighteen hundred years ago. The Jews, though few in number, are scattered over very much the same area as then; they are very similar in religious ideas; "they tithe mint and anise and cummin," but omit the weightier matters. They are oppressed and overtaxed by a power whose yoke is too heavy for them to throw off, but they cannot forget that they were once a nation, and a smoldering idea of nationalism has taken possession of many. They are divided into at least two parties: (1) those who, like the Pharisees of the New Testament, hold firm to the letter of the law, and believe little in human effort in any direction except talmudic study; and (2) the newer party, chiefly colonists, to whom the idea of nationalization appeals rather than a dreamy religious idealism centered around a (to them) very doubtful interpretation of prophecy. While the former are frequently lazy, ill-developed and of low vitality, the latter are usually fine, sturdy men and women who are raising up a race of indigenous Israelites on the soil of their forefathers of a type long foreign to Palestine; they are the hope of Zionism.

Galilee, though small in size and comparatively unimportant in the world's history, was for a few short years honored forever above all lands by having been the dwelling-place of Him who is the Teacher for all who would know the road to the Father, the Master who claims the allegiance of all hearts. At Nazareth He passed His obscure years of preparation and development. On the shores of that strange lake more than six hundred feet below sea level, He gathered out—almost exclusively from the dwellers in the district—those who, as His earliest followers, are destined to be famous while this world lasts.

Although the Christian church in this sense took rise here, it cannot be said that Christianity has ever flourished much on the land of its birth. The early Christian centuries witnessed the rise in Galilee of a predominant and powerful rabbinism. And later, when Christianity became the religion of the district, its reign was short-lived, for in the seventh century it was on account of its corruption swept away by the conquering armies of the Arabian prophet. A few centuries later a militant, though essentially false, Christianity, for a few brief years triumphant, was humbled to the dust at the battle of Hattin, between Nazareth and the Lake. Since that time

a night of ignorance and obscurity has descended upon the land, and even the name of Christ has been hardly known.

The Galilee of the present is only now emerging from the long blight of ignorance, neglect, and internal discord. Much of the land is still desolate, its fields and orchards neglected, its people ignorant of any vital religion and most of all of the teachings of Him on whose account the eyes of half the civilized world turn in imagination to their home. But on all sides there are signs of awakening. The railway from Haifa to Damascus, which traverses the plain of Esdraelon and touches the Lake at its southern end, the little steamboat on the Lake, the rapidly increasing carriage traffic, the prosperous German and Jewish colonies scattered all over the land, all carry promise of improvement in material things. Many of the Fellahîn are migrating to America; of these a good proportion will return with enlarged ideas and a certain amount of capital. The immigrant Jews from all lands, especially the reformed Jews, connected with the Zionist movement, are introducing many improvements in agriculture and new industries. Schools are multiplying all over the land, and many scores of the more intelligent youths of all religions are now being educated in the first-class Christian educational establishments of Beirut and Jerusalem. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth once again "the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." It is in His name that all over the land healing and relief of suffering is meted out to Moslem, Jew, and Christian alike by loving hands.[1] We can surely, with confidence, believe that as day by day the sun rises in splendor behind the dark hills of Bashan and floods lake and valley and mountain side, each return brings nearer the dawn of a better era for this land when once again He, for whose sake the land is ever dear, will here too be honored above all others in a purer, more intelligent, and more devoted way than ever in the past.

[1] Particularly at the medical missions at Haifa, Akka, Nazareth, Tiberias, and Safed.

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